"Emmett's Girl," by Seward W. Hopkins, on Page 11.

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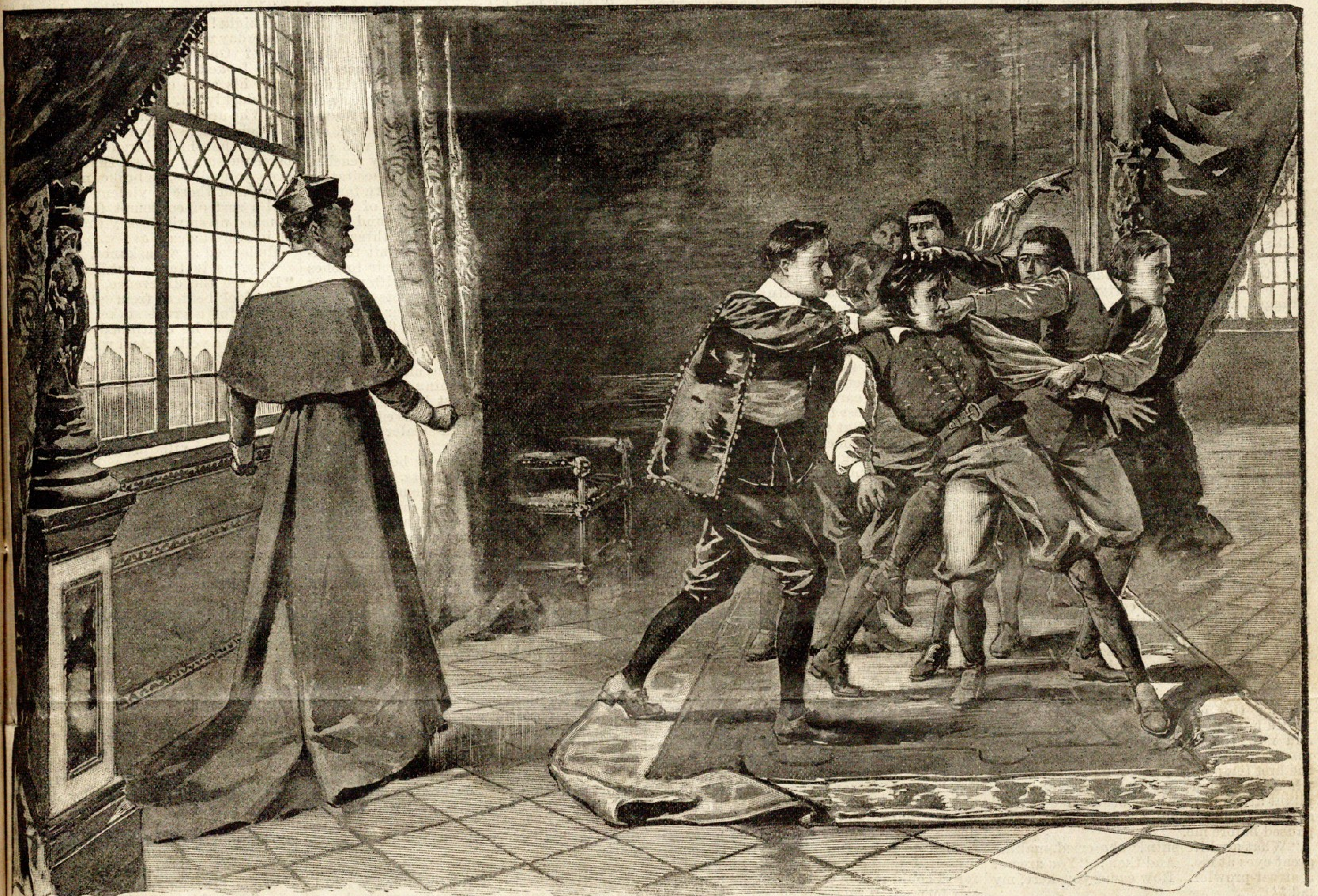

BEFORE I COULD UTTER THREE WORDS, OFFICIOUS HANDS PLUCKED ME UP AND THRUST ME TO THE DOOR.

# FLORE.*

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN,

Author of "A Gentleman of France," "Under the Red Robe," etc., etc.

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CHAPTER I.

IT was about a month after my marriage—and, third clerk to the most noble the Bishop of Beauvais, and even admitted on occasions to write in his presence and prepare his minutes, who should marry if I might not?—it was about a month after my marriage, I say, monsieur, that the thunderbolt to which I have referred fell and shattered my fortunes. I rose one morning—they were firing guns for the victory of Rocroy, I remember, so that it must have been eight weeks or more after the death of the late king, and the glorious rising of the Sun of France—and who so happy as I! A summer morning, monsieur, and bright, and I had all I wished. The river, as it sparkled and rippled against the piers of the Pont Neuf far below, the wet roofs that twinkled under our garret window, were not more brilliant than my lord's fortune; and as is the squirrel, so is the tail. Of a certainty, I was happy that morning. I thought of the little hut under the pinewood at Gabas, and my father cobbling by the unglazed window, his nightcap on his bald head, and his face plastered where the sherd had slipped; and I puffed out my cheeks to think that I had climbed so high. High? How high might not a man climb who had married the daughter of the Queen's Under-Porter, and had sometimes the ear of my lord the Queen's Minister!—my Lord of Beauvais, in whom all men saw the coming master of France!—my lord whose stately presence beamed on a world still chilled by the dead hand of Richelieu!

But that morning—that very morning—I was to learn that he who climbs may fall. I went below at the usual hour; at the usual hour monseigneur left, attended for the council. Presently all the house was in an uproar. My lord had returned and called for Prosper. I fancied that I caught even then something ominous in the sound of my name as it passed from lip to lip; and I hastened, scared, to the chamber. But fast as I went, I did not go fast enough. One thrust me on this side, another on that. The steward cursed me, the head clerk stormed at me, the secretary waited for me at the door, and seizing me by the neck, ran me into the room.

"In, rascal, in!" he growled in my ear; "and I hope your skin may pay for it!"

Naturally, by this time I was quaking. Monseigneur's looks finished me. He stood in the middle of the chamber, gnawing the nails of his left hand, and scowled at me, his handsome face pale and sullen.

"Yes," he said, curtly, "that is the fellow!"

"Wretch!" the head clerk cried, seizing me by the ear, and twisting it until I fell on my knees. "Imbecile! Or more likely he did it on purpose."

"Bribed!" said the secretary.

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“He should be hung up,” the steward cried, truculently, “before he does further mischief. And if my lord will give the word—”

“Silence!” the Bishop said, with a dark glance at me. “What does he plead?”

The head clerk twisted my ear until I screamed.

“Ingrate!” he cried. “Do you hear His Grace speak to you? Answer!”

“My lord,” I cried, piteously, “I have done nothing! Nothing!”

“Nothing!” half a dozen echoed.

“Nothing!” the head clerk added, brutally. “Nothing, and you add a cipher to the census of Paris! Nothing, and your lying pen led my lord to state the population to be five millions, instead of five hundred thousand! Nothing, and you sent His Grace’s Highness to the Council to be corrected by low clerks and people, and made a laughing stock for the Cardinal, and—”

“Silence!” said the Bishop, fiercely. “Enough! Take him away, and—”

“Hang him!” cried the steward.

“No, rascal, but have him to the courtyard, and let the grooms flog him through the gates. And have a care, you,” he continued, addressing me, “that I do not see your face again, or it will be worse for you!”

I flung myself down, and would have appealed against the sentence, but the Bishop, between rage and discomfiture, was pitiless; and before I could utter three words a dozen officious hands plucked me up and were thrusting me to the door. Outside worse things awaited me. A shower of kicks and cuffs and blows rained upon me; vainly struggling and shrieking, and seeking still to gain his ear, I was hustled along the passage to the courtyard, and there dragged, amid brutal jeers and laughter, to the fountain and flung in. When I scrambled out they thrust me back again and again, until, trembling with cold and rage, I at last evaded them, only to be hunted round the yard with leathers and bridles that cut like knives, and drew a scream at every stroke. I doubled like a hare; more than once I knocked half a dozen men down; but I was fast growing exhausted, when some one, more prudent or less cruel than his fellows, opened the gates and I darted into the street.

I was sobbing with rage and pain, dripping, ragged, and barefoot—some rogue had prudently drawn off my shoes in the scuffle. It was a wonder that I was not attacked and chased through the streets. Fortunately, opposite my lord’s gates opened the mouth of a little alley. I plunged into it, and in the first dark corner dropped exhausted, and lay panting in the mud. I, who had risen so happily a few hours before! I, who had climbed so high! I, who had a wife new-married in my garret at home!

I do not know how long I lay there, now cursing the jealousy of the clerks, who would have flayed me to save themselves, and now the cruelty of the grooms, who thought it fine sport to whip a scholar. But the first tempest of passion had spent itself, when a woman—not the first whom my plight attracted, but the others had merely shrugged their shoulders and passed on—paused before me.

“What a white skin!” she cried, making great eyes at me. And then: “You are not a street-prowler. How came you here, my lad?”

I was silent, ashamed to meet her gaze.

She stood a moment staring at me curiously. Then—

“Better go home,” she said, shaking her head sedately, “or those who have robbed you may end by worse. I doubt this is what comes of raking and nightwork. Go home, my lad,” she repeated, and went on her way.

Home! The word raised new thoughts; I scrambled to my feet. I had a home—the Bishop might deprive me of it; but I had also a wife, from whom God only could separate me. I felt a sudden fire run through me at thought of her, and of all I had suffered since I left her arms; and, with new boldness, I turned and, sore and aching as I was, stumbled back to the place of my shame.

The steward and two or three of his underlings were standing in the gateway, and saw me come up, and began to jeer. The high, gray front of monseigneur’s hotel, three sides of a square, towered up behind them; the steward sprawled his feet apart and set his hands to his stout sides and jeered at me.

“Here is the lame leper from the Cour des Miracles!” he cried. “Have a care, or he will give you the evil.”

“Good sir, the swill tub is open,” cried another. “Help yourself.”

A third spat at me and bade me begone for a pig; the passers—there were always a knot of gazers opposite my lord of Beauvais’s palace in those days, when he had the Queen’s ear and bade fair to succeed Richelieu—stayed to stare.

“I want my goods,” I said, trembling.

“Your goods!” the steward answered, swelling out his brawny chest and smiling at me over it. “*Your* goods, indeed! Begone, and be thankful you have escaped so well.”

“Give me my things from my room,” I said, stubbornly, and I tried to enter.

He moved sideways so as to block the passage.

“Your goods? They are monseigneur’s,” he said.

“My wife, then.”

He winked.

“Your wife!” he said. “Well, true; she is not monseigneur’s. But she will do for me.” And with a coarse laugh he winked again at the crowd.

At that, the pent-up rage I had stemmed so long broke out. He stood a head taller than I, but with a scream I sprang at his throat and, by the very surprise of the attack, got him down and beat his face with my fists. His fellows, as soon as they recovered from their astonishment, tore me off; but by that time I had so marked him that the blood poured down from his face. He scrambled to his feet, panting and furious, his oaths tripping over one another.

“To the Chatelet with him!” he cried, spitting out a tooth and staring at me through the mud on his face. “He shall swing for this! He tried to break in! I call you to witness he tried to break in!”

“Ay, to the Chatelet! To the Chatelet!” cried the crowd, siding with the stronger party. He was my lord of Beauvais’s steward; I was a gutter-snipe and dangerous. A dozen hands held me tightly, yet not so tightly but that, a coach passing at that moment and driving us all to the wall, I managed by a jerk—I was desperate by this time, and as fierce as a wild-cat—to snatch myself loose, and in a second was speeding down St. Antoine, with the hue and cry behind me.

I have said I was desperate. In an hour the world was changed for me. In an hour I had broken with every tradition of safe and modest life, and from a sleek scribe became a ragged outlaw flying through the streets. I saw the gallows; I felt already the lash sink like molten lead into the quivering back. I forgot all but the danger; I lived only on my feet, and with them made superhuman efforts. Fortunately the light was failing, and in the dark I distanced the pack by a dozen yards, passing the front of the Palais Royal so swiftly that the Queen’s Guards, though they ran out at the alarm, were too late to intercept me. Thence I strained instinctively, and with the cry of pursuit in my ears, toward the old bridge, intending to cross to the Cité, where I knew all the lanes. But the bridge was alarmed; the Chatelet seemed to yawn for me—they were just lighting the brazier in front of the gloomy pile; and doubling back, while the air roared with shouts of warning, I shot by my pursuers and sped down the narrow Rue de la Chaussee, with the hue and cry hard on my heels.

I had no plan now; only terror added wings to my feet; and the end of that street gained, I darted blindly down another, and yet another, with straining chest and legs that began to fail, and always in my ears the yells that rose round me as fresh pursuers joined in the chase. Still I kept ahead. I was even gaining. Another turn, and, with night thickening, I might hope to escape, if I could baffle those who from time to time—but in a half-hearted way, not knowing whether I were armed—tried to stop me or trip me up.

Suddenly turning a corner—I had gained a quiet part where blind walls lined the alleys—I found a man running before me. At the same instant the posse in pursuit quickened their pace in a last effort. I, in answer, put forth my last strength, and in a dozen paces came up with the man. He turned to me. Our eyes met. Desperate myself, I read equal terror in his; and before I could reason on the fact, he bent himself forward as he ran, and, with a singular movement, flung a parcel he carried into my arms, and wheeling abruptly, plunged into an alley on his left.

## CHAPTER II.

It was done in a moment. Instinctively I caught the burden and held it; but the impetus with which he had thrown it sent me reeling to the right, and the lane being narrow, I fell against the wall before I could steady myself. As luck would have it, however, that which would have destroyed me was my salvation; I happened to hit the wall where a door broke it; the door, lightly latched, flew open under the impact, and I fell inwards. I alighted, in darkness, on my hands and knees, heard the stifled yelp of a dog, and in a second, though I could see nothing, was up and had the door closed behind me.

Then, and not till then, I listened, panting and breathless, and heard the hunt go raving through the lane and the noise die in the distance, until only the beating of my heart broke the close silence of the room in which I stood. When this had lasted a minute or two I began to peer and wonder where I was; and remembering the dog, moved stealthily to find the latch and escape. As I did so, the bundle, to which through all I had clung, moved in my arms.

I almost dropped it; and then held it from me with a swift movement of repulsion. It stirred again; it was warm. In an instant the truth flashed on me. It was a child.

Hot as I had been before, the sweat rose on me at the thought. For I saw again the man’s face of livid terror, and guessed that he had stolen the child, and I feared the worst. He had taken the rabble hooting at my heels for the avengers of blood, and had only been too thankful to rid himself of the damning fact and escape.

And now I had it, and had as much, or more, to fear. For an instant the impulse to lay the parcel down and glide out, and so be clear of it, was strong upon me. And that, I think, is what the ordinary man, however brave, would have done. But for one thing, I was desperate, I knew not, when outside, whither to go or where to save myself; and for another, my clerk’s wits were already busy showing me how, with luck, I might use the occasion and avoid the risk; might discover the parents and, without suffering for the theft, restore the child. Beyond that I saw a vista of pardon, employment and reward.

Suddenly the dog whined again, close to me, and that decided me. I had found the latch already, and now I warily drew the door open, and in a moment was in the lane, looking up and down. I saw nothing to alarm me; darkness had completely fallen; no one was moving; the neighborhood seemed to be of the quietest. I made up my mind to take the bold course: to return at all hazards to St. Antoine, seek my father-in-law at the gates of the Palais Royal—where he had the night turn—and throw the child and myself on his protection.

Without doubt it was the wisest course I could choose; and as in those days the streets of Paris, even in the district of the Louvre and Palais Royal, were ill-lighted, and a network of lanes and dark courts encroached on the most fashionable parts and favoring secret access to them, I foresaw no great difficulty short of the moment when I must stand out in the lighted lodge and exhibit my rags. But my evil star was still above the horizon. I had scarcely reached the end of the lane, and was still hesitating there, uncertain which way to turn for the shortest course, when a babel of voices broke on my ear, lights swept round a distant corner, and I found myself threatened with a new danger. I did not wait to consider whether this band, with their torches and weapons, had aught to do with me—my nerves were shaken; the streets of Paris were full of terrors; every corner had a gallows for me—but I turned, and, fleeing back the way I had come, made a hurried effort to find the house which had sheltered me. Failing, in one or two trials, and seeing that the lights were really coming that way, and that in a moment I must be discovered, I sprang across the lane and dived into the alley by which the child-stealer had vanished.

I had not taken ten steps before something, unseen in the darkness, tripped me up, and I fell sprawling in the mud. In the fall my burden rolled from my arms, and was instantly snatched up by a dark figure, which, rising as by magic beside me, was gone into the gloom almost as quickly. I got up limping, and flung a curse after both, but the lights already shone on the mouth of the alley, and I had no time to lose if I would not be detected. I set off running down the passage, turned to the left at the end and along a lane, thence into another lane and a wider road; nor did I stop until I had left all signs and sounds of pursuit behind me.

The place in which I came to a stand at last was a piece of waste land, apparently in the suburbs of the city. High up on the left I could discern a light or two piercing the gloom of the sky, and knew they shone from the windmills of Montmartre. In every other direction lay darkness; desolation swept by the night wind; silence broken only by the dismal howling of far-off watchdogs. I might have been ten miles from Paris.

For very misery I sobbed aloud. I no longer knew where I was; nor, had I known, had I the strength to return. Excitement had carried me far, but at last I felt the weakness of utter exhaustion, and, sick and aching, craved only a hole in which to lie down and die. Fortunately, at this moment I met the wind, and caught the scent of new-mown hay, and stumbling forward a few steps, made out a low building looming through the night. I staggered to it, and discovered that it was a shed; and entering with my hands extended, felt the hay under my feet. With a sob of thankfulness I sank down upon it, but instead of the soft couch I expected, fell on the angular body of a man, who, with a savage curse, flung me off.

This, at another time, would have scared me to death; but I was so far gone in wretchedness that I felt no fear and little surprise. I rolled away without a word, and curling myself up at a distance of a few feet from my fellow-lodger, fell in a minute fast asleep.

When I awoke, daylight, though the sun was not up, was beginning to creep into the shed. I turned; every bone I had ached: I remembered yesterday’s doings, and groaned. Presently the hay beside me rustled, and over the shoulder of the mass against which I lay made out the face of a man peering at me. I felt a thrill of fear, and stared back, spellbound; I had not yet broken with every habit of suspicion, nor could in a moment recollect that I had nothing but rags to lose. In silence, which neither broke by so much as a movement, we waited, gazing, while the light in the mean hovel grew and grew, and minute by minute brought out more closely the other’s features.

At length I knew him, and almost at the same moment he recognized me, and, uttering an oath of rage, rose up as if to spring at my throat. But either because I did not recoil—being too deep-set in the hay to move—or for some other reason, he only shook his claw-like fingers at me, and held off.

“Where is it, you dog?” he cried, finding his voice with an effort. “Speak, or I will have your throat slit! Speak, do you hear? What have you done with it?”

He was the man who had passed the child to me. I watched him heedfully, and after a moment’s hesitation I told him that it had been taken from me, and when and where.

“And you don’t know the man who took it?” he screamed.

“Not from Adam. It was dark,” I said.

In his disappointment and rage at receiving this answer, I thought that he would fairly fall upon me, but he only choked and swore, and then stood scowling, the picture of despair, until some new thought pricking him, he threw up his arms again and cried out afresh:

“Oh, *mon Dieu*, what a fool I was!” he screamed. “What a craven I was! I had a a fortune in my hands, fool, and I threw it away!”

I thought bitterly of my own case—I was not much afraid of him now; I began to think that I understood him.

“So had I, yesterday morning,” I said. “You are in no worse case than others.”

“Yesterday morning!” he exclaimed. “No, last night! Then, if you like, you had. But yesterday morning? Fortune and you, scarecrow? Go hang yourself!”

He looked gloomily at me for a moment with his arms crossed on his chest and his face darkly set. Then—

“Who are you?” he asked, curtly.

I told him. When he learned that the rabble that had alarmed him had in fact been pursuing me, so that his fright had been groundless, he broke into fresh execrations, and those so violent that I began to feel a sort of contempt for him, and even plucked up spirit to say that he seemed to be in as evil a case as I was.

He looked at me askance.

“Ay, as it turns out,” he said grimly. “But see the difference, idiot. You are a poor fool beaten from pillar to post. I played for a great stake. I have lost! I have lost!” he continued, his voice rising almost to a yell. “And we are both in the gutter! But if I had won—if I had won, man—”

He did not finish the sentence, but flung himself down on his face in the hay, and bit and tore in his passion. A moment I viewed him with contempt, and thought him a poor creature for a villain. Then the skirt of his coat, curling over as he groveled and writhed, disclosed something that turned my thoughts into another channel. Crushed under his leather girdle was a little cape, or a garment of that kind, of velvet so lustrous that it shone where I saw it as the eyes shine in a toad. Nor it only. Before he rolled over and hid it, I spied, embroidered on one corner of the velvet, a stiff gold crown!

I barely repressed a cry. Cold, damp, aching, I felt the heat run through me like wine. A crown! A little purple cape! Then last night—last night!—I had carried the King—the King of France—in my arms!

I no longer found it hard to understand the man’s terror of yesterday, or his grief and despair this morning. He had, indeed, played for a great stake, and risked torture and the wheel, and lost!—and lost!

I looked at him with new eyes and a sort of wonder, and had scarcely time to compose my face, when, the paroxysm of his fury past, he rose, and looking at me askance, to see how I took his groveling, asked me sullenly whither I was going.

“To monseigneur’s,” I said, cunningly. Had I answered: “To the Palais Royal,” he would have suspected me.

“To be beaten again?” he sneered.

I said nothing to that, but asked him whither he was going.

“Heaven knows!” he said.

When I went out, however, he accompanied me, and we slunk silently, like the pair of night-birds we were, through lanes and alleys until we were fairly in town again. By that time the sun was up, and the market people were beginning to enter the city. Here and there I found curious eyes on me, and, thinking of the company I was in, I trembled, and wondered that the alarm was not abroad and the bells proclaiming us from every tower. I was more than content, therefore, when my companion halted before a small door in a blind wall over against another small, mean door in a like wall.

“Do you stay here?” I said.

He swore churlishly.

“What is that to you?” he said, looking up and down. “Go your way, idiot.”

I was glad to affect a like ill-humor, shrugged my shoulders and lounged on without looking back; but my brain was on fire. The King! The four-year-old King? What was I to do? To whom go with my knowledge? And then, even then, while I paused, hesitating, I heard steps running behind me, and turned to find him at my elbow, his face pale, his eyes burning, and his whole demeanor changed.

“Stay!” he cried, panting, and seizing me by the breast of my shirt. “The man who tripped you up, fellow—you did not see him?”

“It was dark,” I answered curtly. “I told you I did not know him from Adam.”

“But had he”—he gasped—“you heard him run away—was he lame?”

I could not repress an exclamation.

“*Par Dieu!*” I said. “Yes, I had forgotten that. He was. I remember I heard his foot go cluck-cluck, cluck-cluck, as he ran.”

His face became burning red and he staggered. If ever man was near dying from blood in his head, it was that man. But in a moment he drew a long breath and got the better of it, nodded to me, and turned away. I marked, however—that he did not go back to the door at which I had left him, but, after looking round once and espying me, took a lane on the right and disappeared.

## CHAPTER III.

But I knew, or thought that I knew, all now, and the moment he was out of sight, I set off toward the Palais Royal like a hound let loose, heeding neither those against whom I bumped in the straighter ways, nor the danger I ran of recognition, nor the miserable aspect I wore. I forgot all save my news, even my own wretchedness, and never halted or stayed to take breath until I stood panting in the doorway of the lodge at the Palais and met my father-in-law's gaze of disgust and astonishment.

He was just off the night turn, and met me on the threshold. I saw beyond the grinning faces of the under-porters. But I had that to tell which still upheld me. I threw up my hands.

"I know where they are!" I cried, breathlessly. "I can take you to them!"

He gazed at me, dumb with surprise and rage; and doubtless a less reputable son-in-law than I appeared it would have been hard to find. Then his passion found vent.

"Pig! Jackal! Gutter-bird!" he cried. "Begone! Begone, or I will have you flayed!"

"But I know where they are! I know where they have him!" I protested.

His face underwent a startling change. He darted forward, with a nimbleness wonderful in one of his bulk, and caught me by the collar.

"What," he said, "have you seen the dog?"

"The dog!" I cried. "No, but I have seen the King! I have held him in my arms! He is—"

He released me suddenly and fell back a pace, looking at me so oddly that I paused.

"Say it again," he said, slowly. "You have held the—"

"The King! The King!" I cried, impatiently. "In these arms. I know where they have him, or, at least, where the robbers are."

His double chin fell, and his face lost color.

"Poor devil!" he said, still staring at me. "They have driven him mad!"

"But—" I cried, advancing. "Are you going to—"

He waved me off and retreated a step hastily and crossed himself.

"Jacques," he exclaimed, "move him oft! Move him off, do you hear, man?"

"But I tell you," I cried, fiercely, "they have stolen the King! They have stolen His Majesty, and I—"

"There, there, be calm," he answered. "They have stolen the Queen's dog, that is true. But have it your own way if you like; only go. Go from here, and quickly, or it will be the worse for you, for here comes Monseigneur the Bishop to wait on Her Majesty, and if he sees you, you will— There, make way, make way," he continued, addressing the little crowd that had assembled. "Way, way for Monseigneur the Bishop of Beauvais!"

As he spoke the Bishop and his train turned out of St. Antoine, and the crowd attending him eddied about the Palais entrance. I was jostled and swept out of the way, and luckily escaping notice, found myself a few minutes later crouching in a blind alley that runs beside the church of St. Jacques, munching and wolfing a crust of bread which one of the men with whom I had often idled in the lodge had thrust in my hand. I wet it with tears. No more miserable outcast was in all Paris that day. What had become of my wife I knew not, and I dared not show myself at the Bishop's to ask. My father-in-law was hardened against me, and at the best he thought me mad. I had no longer home or friend, and—this at the moment sharply—the gorgeous hopes in which I had indulged a few moments before were as last year's snow.

I crouched and shivered. In St. Antoine, at the mouth of the alley, a man was publishing a notice, and presently his voice caught my attention in the middle of my lamentations. I listened, at first idly, then with my mind.

"Oyez! Oyez!" he cried. "Whereas some evil person, having no fear of God or of the law before his eyes, has impudently, feloniously and treasonably stolen from the Palais Royal a spaniel, the property of the Queen—the Queen's most excellent Majesty—that is to say, that any one—" Rumble—rumble—rumble—here a passing coach drowned some sentences, and then I caught—"five hundred crowns, the same to be paid by Monseigneur the Bishop of Beauvais, President of the Council!"

"And glad to pay it," snarled a voice, quite close to me. I started and looked up. Two men were talking at a window above my head.

"Yet it is a high price for a dog," the other sneered.

"But low for a Queen. Still it buys her. And this is Richelieu's France!"

"Tush!" the other said, pithily. "Well, you know the proverb: 'A living dog is better than a dead lion.'"

"Ay," his companion rejoined, "but I have a fancy that *that* dog's name is spelled neither with an F for Flore—which was the Queen's name, was it not?—nor a B for Beauvais; nor a C for Condé; but with an M."

"For Mazarin?" the other answered, quickly. "Yes, if he find the dog. But Beauvais is in possession—"

"Rocroy shook him."

"Still he is in possession."

"So is my shoe in possession of my foot. And see—I take it off. Beauvais is tottering, I tell you. It wants but a—"

I heard no more, for they moved from the window; but they left me a different man. Urged, less by the hope of reward than by the desire for vengeance, my clerk's wits awoke once more, while the very desperation of my affairs gave me the courage I sometimes lacked. I recognized that I had had not to do with a king but a dog, and that none the less that way lay revenge. And I rose up and slunk again into St. Antoine, and through the crowd and up the Rue de St. Martin and by St. Merri, a dirty, ragged, barefoot rascal, from whom people drew their skirts—yes, all that, and the light of the sun on it; all that, and yet vengeance itself, the hand that should yet drag my thankless, cruel master's fauteuil from under him.

Once I halted, weighing the risks and whether I should take my knowledge to the Cardinal. But I knew nothing definite; and hardening my heart, I went on until I reached the alley between the blind walls. It was noon. The alley was empty; the neighboring lane empty. I looked this way and that, and slowly went down to the door at which the man had halted, but to which, as soon as he knew that the game was not lost, he had been heedful not to return.

There, seeing all so quiet, with the green of a tree showing here and there above the wall, I began to blench and wonder how I was to take the next step; and for half an hour, I dare say, I sneaked to and fro, now in sight of the door and now with my back to it, afraid to advance and ashamed to retreat. At length I went through the alley, and seeing how quiet and respectable it lay, with the upper part of a house visible at intervals above the wall, I took at last heart of grace and tried the door.

It stood so firm that I despaired; and after listening and looking to assure myself that the attempt had not been observed, I was about to move away, when I espied the edge of a ring projecting from under the door. Still all was quiet. A stealthy look around, and I had the key out. To draw back now was to write myself craven all my life, and with a shaking hand I thrust the wards into the lock, turned them, and in another moment stood on the other side of the door in a neat garden, speckled with sunshine and shade, and all was silent.

I remained a full minute flattened against the door, staring fearfully at the high-fronted mansion that beyond the garden looked down on me with twelve great eyes. But all remained silent, and observing presently that the windows were shuttered, I took courage to move, and slid under a tree and breathed again.

Still I looked and listened, fearfully, for the silence seemed to watch me; but nothing happened, and everything I saw tending to prove the house empty, I grew bolder and, sneaking from bush to bush, reached the door at last, and, with a backward glance between courage and desperation, tried it.

It was locked, but that I hardly noticed; for, as my hand left the latch, from some remote part of the house came the long-drawn whine of a dog!

I stood, listening and turning hot and cold in the sunshine, and dared not touch the latch again lest others should hear the noise. Instead, I stole out of the doorway, and crept round the house and round the house again, hunting for a back entrance. I found none, but at last goaded by the reflection that fortune would never again be so nearly within my grasp, I marked a window on the first floor and in the side of the house by which, it seemed to me, I might enter. A mulberry tree stood by it and it lacked a shutter, and other trees veiled the spot. To be brief, in two minutes I had my knee on the sill, and sweating with terror, forced the casement in and dropped on the floor.

Then I stood an instant, listening, in a bare room, the door of which stood ajar. Somewhere in the bowels of the house the dog whined again, otherwise all was still—deadly still. At length, emboldened by the silence, I crept out and stole along a passage, seeking the way down.

The passage was dark, and every board on which I stepped shrieked an alarm. But I felt my way to the landing at the head of the stairs, and was about to descend, when some impulse, I know not what—perhaps a shrinking from the dark parts below, to which I was about to trust myself—moved me to open one of the shutters and peer out.

I did so, cautiously, and but a little; and found myself looking, not into the garden through which I had passed, but into the one beyond the alley, and there on a scene so strange, and yet apropos to my thoughts, that I paused, gaping.

On a plat of grass four men were standing, two and two; between them, with nose upraised and scenting this way and that, moved a beautiful black-and-tan spaniel. The eyes of all four men were riveted on the dog, which, as I looked, walked sedately first to the one pair, and then, as if dissatisfied, to the other pair, and then again stood midway and sniffed the air. The men were speaking, but I could not catch even their voices and was reduced to drawing what inferences I could from their appearance.

Of the two farther from me, one was my rascally bed-fellow, the other a crooked villain almost in rags, with one leg shorter than the other, yet a face bold and even handsome. Of the nearer pair, who had their backs to me, the shorter, dressed in black, wore an ordinary aspect; when, however, my eyes travelled to his companion they paused. He, it was plain to me, was the chief of the party, for he alone was covered; and though I could not see his face nor more of his figure than that he was tall and of handsome presence, it chanced that as I looked he raised his hand to his chin, and I caught the sparkle of a superb jewel.

That dazzled me, and the presence of the dog puzzled me, and I continued to watch. Presently the man again raised his hand, and this time it seemed to me that an order was given, for the lame man started into action, and moved briskly toward the wall which bordered the alley—and consequently toward the house in which I stood. My companion of the night interposed, however, and apparently would have done the errand himself, but at a word he stood sulkily and let the other proceed, who, when he had all but disappeared—on so little a thing it turned—below the level of the intervening walls, looked up and caught sight of me at the window.

## CHAPTER IV.

Apparently he gave the alarm, for in an instant the eyes of all four were on me. I hung a moment in sheer surprise; then, as the lame man and his comrades sprang to the door in the wall, with the evident intention of engaging me, I flung the shutter close, and, cursing my curiosity, fled down the stairs.

I had done better had I gone to the window by which I had entered, for all below was dark; and at the foot of the staircase I stood, unable, in my panic, to remember the position of the door. A key grating in the lock told me that, but it was too late. Almost on the instant the door flew open, a flood of light entered, and a cry warned me that I was detected. I turned to go back, but stumbled before I had mounted six steps, and as I staggered up again, felt a weight fall on my back and the clutch of long fingers close upon my throat. I screamed, however, felt the fingers close in a deadly grip, cold and merciless, and then in sheer terror I swooned.

When I recovered consciousness, I found myself propped in a chair, and for a time sat wondering hazily where I was. In front of me a great door stood open, admitting a draught of summer air and a flood of sunshine that fell even to my feet. Through the doorway I looked on grass and trees, and heard sparrows twitter and the chirp of a cricket, and found all so peaceful that my mind went no farther, and it was only after some minutes that I recognized, with a sharp return of terror that shook me to the soul, that I was still in the hall of the empty house. That brought back other things, and with a shudder I carried my hand to my throat and tried to rise. A hand put me back, and a dry voice said in my ear:

"Be easy, M. Prosper; I am afraid we put you to some inconvenience."

I looked dizzily at the speaker, and recognized him for one of those whom I had seen in the garden. He had the air of a secretary, or—as he stood rubbing his chin and looking down at me with a saturnine smile—of a physician. I read in his eyes something cold and not too human, yet it went no farther. His manner was suave, and his voice, when he spoke again, as well calculated to reassure as his words were to surprise me.

"You are better now?" he said. "Yes, then I have to congratulate you. Few men, M. Prosper, few men, believe me, were ever so lucky. You were lately, I think, in the service of Monseigneur the Bishop of Beauvais, President of Her Majesty's Council?"

I fancied that a faint note of irony lurked in his words. I kept silence.

"And yesterday were dismissed," he continued easily, disregarding my astonishment. "Well, to-day you shall be reinstated—and rewarded. Your business here, I believe, was to recover Her Majesty's dog?"

I remembered that the wretch whose finger-marks were on my throat might be within hearing, and I tried to utter a denial. He waved it aside politely.

"Just so," he said. "Well, the dog is in that closet, and on two conditions it is at your service."

Amazed before, I stared at him now in a stupor of astonishment.

"You are surprised," he said. "Yet the case is of the simplest. We stole the dog, and, therefore, we cannot restore it without incurring suspicion. You, on the other hand, who are known to the Bishop, and did not steal it, may safely restore it. I need not say that we divide the reward. That is one of the two conditions."

"And the other?" I stammered.

"That you refresh your memory as to the past," he answered, lightly. "If I have the tale rightly, you saw a man convey a dog to this house, an empty house in a lonely suburb. You watched, and saw the man leave, and followed him; he took the alarm, fled, and dropped, in his flight, the dog's coat—I think I see it there. On that you hurried with the coat to monseigneur, and gave him the address of the house, and—"

"And the dog?" I exclaimed.

"No. Let monseigneur come and find the dog for himself," he answered, smiling. "In the closet."

I felt the blood tingle through all my limbs.

"But if he comes and does not find it?" I cried.

The stranger shrugged his shoulders.

"He will find it," he said, coolly. And, slightly raising his voice, he called: "Flore! Flore!" For answer a dog whined behind a door and scratched the panels and whined again.

The stranger nodded, as well pleased.

"There," he said; "you have it. It is there and will be there. And I think that is all. Only keep two things in mind, my friend: For the first, a person will claim our share of the reward at the proper time; for the second, I would be careful not to tell Monseigneur the President of the Council"—again a faint note of irony—"the true story, lest a worse thing happen," and the stranger, with a very ugly smile, touched his throat.

"I will not," I said, shuddering.

"Then—then, I think that is all," he answered, briskly. "And I may say farewell. Until we meet again, adieu, M. Prosper." And setting on his hat, with a polite gesture, he turned his back to me, went out into the sunlight, passed to the left and vanished. I heard the garden-door close with a crash, and then silence—silence, broken only by the faint whine of the dog as it moved in its prison.

Was I alone? I waited awhile before I dared to move, and even when I found courage to rise, stood listening, with a beating heart, expecting a footfall on the stairs or that something—I knew not what—would rush on me from the closed doors of this mysterious house. But the silence endured. The sparrows outside twittered, the cricket renewed its chirp, and at length, drawing courage from the sunlight, I moved forward and lifted the dog's coat from the floor. Five minutes later I was in the streets, on my way to the Bishop's hotel, the morsel of velvet tucked under my girdle.

I have since thought that I did not fully appreciate the marvel that had happened to me. By this time I was light-headed. I went my way as a man moves in a dream, and even when I came to the door of the hotel, suffered none of those qualms which must have shaken me had I been sensible. I did not even question how I should reach monseigneur, which proves that we often delude ourselves with vain fears, and climb obstacles where none exist. For, as it happened, he was descending from his coach when I entered the yard, and though he raised his gold-headed staff at sight of me, and in a fury bade the servants oust me, I had the passion, if not the wit, to wave the velvet coat in his face and cry my errand before them all.

Heaven knows, at that there was such a sudden pause and about-face as must have made the stolen dog laugh had it been there. Monseigneur, in high excitement, bade them bring me in to him. The secretary whispered into my ear that he had a cloak that would replace the one I had lost; a valet told me that my wife was gone to her father's; a second brought me food and nudged me to remember him; others ran and fetched me shoes and cap; and all—all from the head clerk, who was most insistent, downwards, would know where the dog was.

But I had even then the sense to keep my secret, and would tell my story only to the Bishop. He heard it. In ten minutes he was in his coach on his way to the house, taking me with him. His presence and the food they had given me had sobered me somewhat, and I trembled, as we went along, lest the villains had some disappointment yet in store for me—lest the closet be empty. But a whine, growing into a howl, greeted us on the threshold, and the closet door being forced, in a trice the dog was amongst us.

Monseigneur clapped his hands and swore freely.

"*Dieu benisse!*" he cried. "It is the dog, sure enough! Here, Flore, Flore!" Then as the dog jumped on us and licked his hand, he turned to me. "Lucky for you, rascal!" he cried in good humor. "There shall be fifty crowns in your pocket, and your desk again!"

I gasped.

"But the reward, Monseigneur?" I stammered.

He bent his black brows.

"Reward! You villain!" he thundered. "Is it not enough that I spare you the gallows? Reward? For what do I pay you wages, do you think, except to do my work? And you ask reward besides? Go and hang yourself! Or rather," he continued, grimly, "stir at your peril! Look to him, Bonnivet, he is a rogue ingrain, and bring him with me to the ante-chamber. Her Majesty may desire to ask him questions, and if he answer them, well! He shall still have the fifty crowns I promised him. If not, I shall know how to deal with him."

At that, and the reversal of all my hopes, I fell into my old rage again, and even his servants looked oddly at him, until a sharp word recalled them to their duty, on which they hustled me off with little ceremony, and the less for that which they had before showed me. While the Bishop, carrying the dog in his arms, mounted his coach and went by the Rue St. Martin and St. Antoine, they hurried me by short-cuts and byways to the Palais Royal, which we reached as his running footman came in sight. The approach to the gate was blocked by a great crowd of people, and for a moment I was fond enough to imagine that they had to do with my affair—and I shrank back. But the steward, with a thrust of his knee against my hip, which showed me that he had not forgotten my blow, urged me forward, and from what passed round me as we pushed through the press, I gathered that a score of captured colors had arrived within the hour from Flanders, and were being presented to the Queen.

The courtyard confirmed this, for in the open part of it, and much pressed on by the curious who thronged the arcades, we found a troop of horses, plumed and mud-stained, fresh from the Flanders road. The officers who bore the trophies we overtook on the stairs near the door of the ante-chamber. Burning with rage as I was, and strung to the last pitch of excitement, I yet remember that I thought it an odd time to push in with a dog; but monseigneur did not seem to see this. Whether he took a certain pleasure in belittling the war-party to whom he was opposed, or merely knew his ground well, he went on, thrust the *militaires* aside with little ceremony, and, as every one was as quick to give place to him as he was to advance, in a moment we were in the ante-chamber.

I had never been admitted before, and from the doorway, within which I paused in Bonnivet's keeping, I viewed the scene with an interest that for the first time overcame my sense of injustice. The long room hummed with talk; a crowd of churchmen and pages, with a sprinkling of the lesser nobility, many lawyers and some soldiers filled it from end to end. In one corner was a group of tradesmen bearing plate for the Queen's inspection; in another stood a knot of suitors with petitions; while everywhere men, whose eager faces and expectant eyes were their best petitions, watched the farther door with quivering lips, and sighed whenever it opened and emitted merely a councilor or a marquis. Several times a masked lady flitted through the crowd, with a bow here and the honor of her tapering fingers there. The windows were open, and the murmur of the throng without mingling with the stir of talk within, seemed to fill up the light and color of the room.

Monseigneur, with his chaplain and pages at his shoulder, making in his stately way for the farther door, met M. de Chateauneuf and paused to speak. When he escaped from him, a dozen clients, whose obsequious bows rendered evasion impossible, still delayed him. And I had grown cold and hot again, and he was still on his progress, when the inner door opened, half a dozen voices cried, "The Queen!" and an usher with a silver wand passed down the room and ranked the company on either side—not without some struggling, and once a fierce oath and twice a smothered outcry.

## CHAPTER V.

Of the bevy of ladies in attendance, only half a dozen entered for a few paces within the doorway. The Queen stood still to receive my patron, who advanced to meet her. It seemed to me that she was not best pleased to see him, and certainly her voice rang loud and peevishly as she cried:

"What, my lord! Are you here? I came to receive the trophies from Rocroy, and did not expect to see you at this hour."

"I bring my own excuse, Madame," he answered, unabashed. "Have I your Majesty's leave to present it?" he continued, with a smirk and a low bow.

"I came to receive the colors," she retorted, still frowning.

"I bring your Majesty something equally to your liking," he replied.

Then I think she caught his meaning, for her proud, handsome Hapsburg face cleared wonderfully, and she clapped her hands together with a gesture of pleasure almost childish. "What!" she exclaimed. "Have you—"

"Yes, Madame," he said, smiling gallantly. "Bonnivet!"

But Bonnivet had watched his moment, and before the name fell clear of his master's lips, was beside him, and with bent knee laid the dog tenderly at Her Majesty's feet. She uttered a cry of joy and stooped to caress it, her fair ringlets falling and hiding her face. On that I did not see exactly what happened, for her ladies flocked round her, and all that reached me where I stood by the door took the form of excited cries of "Flore! Flore! Oh, the darling!" and the like. A few old men who stood nearest the wall and farthest from the Queen raised their eyebrows, and the officers standing with the colors by the door wore fallen faces; but nine-tenths of the crowd seemed to be fairly carried away by the Queen's delight, and congratulated one another as if ten Rocroys had been won.

Suddenly, while I hung in suspense, expecting each moment to be called forward, I heard a little stir at my elbow, and looking to the side, saw the knot on the threshold break inward to give place, while several voices whispered: "Mazarin!" As I looked, he came in, and pausing to speak to the foremost of the officers, gave me the opportunity, which I had never enjoyed before, of viewing him near at hand; and in a moment it flashed upon me—though now he wore his cardinal's robes, and then had been very simply dressed—that it was he whose back I had seen and whose dazzling ring had blinded me in the garden.

The thought had scarcely grown to a conviction before he passed on, apologizing almost humbly to those whom he had displaced, and courtesying to all; and this, and perhaps also the fact that the mass of those present belonged to my patron's party, and were not quick to see him, rendered his progress so slow that, my name being called and everybody hustling me forward, I came face to face with the Queen at the moment that he did, and saw—though for a while I was too much excited to understand—what passed.

Her Majesty, it seemed to me, did not look unkindly upon him. But the Bishop was so full of his success and uplifted by the presence of his friends, that he could not contain himself.

"Ha, the Cardinal!" he cried; and before the Queen could speak—"I hope your Eminence has been as zealous in Her Majesty's service as I have been."

"As zealous, assuredly," the Cardinal answered, meekly. "As effective? Alas, it is not given to all to vie with your lordship in affairs."

But this, though I detected no smack of irony in the tone, did not seem to please the Queen.

"The Bishop has done me a great service. He has recovered my dog," she said, tartly.

"He is a happy man, and the happy must look to be envied," the Cardinal answered, gayly. "Your Majesty's dog—"

"Your Eminence never liked Flore!" the Queen exclaimed.

"You never made a greater mistake, Madame," the Cardinal answered, with unusual emphasis. "Flore—but the dog is not here, I think."

"Your Eminence is for once at a loss," the Bishop sneered, and at a word from him one of the ladies came forward, nursing the dog in her arms.

The Cardinal looked.

"Umph!" he said. And he looked again, frowning.

I did not know then why the Queen took heed even of his looks, and I started when she cried, pettishly:

"Well, sir, what now?"

The Cardinal pursed up his lips.

The Bishop could bear it no longer.

"He will say presently," he cried, snorting with indignation, "that it is not the dog!"

His Eminence shrugged his shoulders very slightly, and turned the palms of his hands outward.

"Oh," he said, "if Her Majesty is satisfied."

"*Mon Dieu!*" the Queen cried, angrily. "What do you mean?" But she turned to the lady who held the dog and took it from her. "It *is* the dog," she said. "Do you think that I do not know my own? Flore! Flore!" and she set the dog on its feet. It turned to her and wagged its tail eagerly.

"Poor Flore!" said the Cardinal. "Flore!" It went to him. "Certainly its name is Flore," he continued, sulkily. "But it used to die at the word of command, I think."

"What it did, it will do!" Monseigneur de Beauvais cried, scornfully. "But I see that your Eminence was right in one thing you said."

The Cardinal bowed.

"That I should be envied!" the Bishop continued, with a sneer, and he glanced round the circle. There was a general titter; a great lady at the Queen's elbow laughed out.

"Flore," said the Queen, "die. Die, good dog. Do you hear? *Mon Dieu!* Die!"

But the dog only gazed into her face and wagged its tail, and though she cried to it again and again and angrily, it made no attempt to obey. On this, a deep-drawn breath ran round the circle. One looked at another, a score of heads were thrust forward, and some who had seemed merry enough the moment before looked grave as mutes now.

"It used to bark for France and growl for Spain," the Cardinal continued, in his softest voice. "Perhaps—"

"France!" the Queen cried, harshly, and she stamped her foot on the floor. "France! France!"

But the dog only retreated, cowering and dismayed, and at a distance wagged its tail pitifully.

"France!" cried the Queen, desperately. The dog cowered.

"I am afraid, my lord, that it has lost its accomplishments in your company," the Cardinal said, a faint smile curling his lips.

The Bishop dropped a smothered oath.

"It *is* the dog!" he cried, passionately.

But the Queen turned to him, her face crimson.

"I do not agree with you," she replied. "And more, my lord," she continued with vehemence, "I should be glad if you would explain how you came into possession of this dog. A dog so nearly resembling my dog, and yet not my dog, could not be found in a moment without some foul contrivance."

"It has forgotten its tricks," the Bishop said.

"Nonsense!" the Queen retorted.

A great many faces had grown grave by this time. I have said that the room was filled for the most part with the Bishop's supporters.

"At any rate, I know nothing about it. That man found it," he exclaimed, wiping his brow and pointing to me. Between anger and discomfiture he stammered.

"One of my lord's servants," the Cardinal said, easily.

"Oh!" the Queen answered, with a world of meaning, and she looked at me with eyes before which I quailed. "Is that true, fellow?" she said. "Are you in my lord's service?"

I stammered an affirmative.

"Then I wish to hear no more," she replied haughtily. "No, my lord. Enough!" she continued, raising her voice to drown his protestations. "I do not care to know whether you were more sinned against than sinning, or a greater fool and your adviser a knave; pray, take your creature away. Doubtless in a very short time I should have discovered the cheat for myself. I think I see a difference now. But, as it is, I am greatly indebted to his Eminence for his aid—and sagacity."

She brought out the last word with withering emphasis, and amid profuse silence. The Bishop, too wise after the event to persist longer in the dog's identity, still tried desperately to utter a word of excuse; but the Queen, whose vanity had received a serious wound, cut him short with a curt and freezing dismissal; and immediately turning to the Cardinal, requested him to introduce to her the officers who had the colors in charge.

It may be imagined how I felt, and what terrors I experienced during this struggle, since it required no great wit to infer that the Bishop, if defeated, would wreak his vengeance on me. Already a dozen who had attended his *levée* were fawning on the Cardinal; the Queen had turned her shoulder to him. A great lady, over whom he bent to hide his chagrin, talked to him indeed, but flippantly, and with eyes half closed. For all these slights, and the real defeat which they indicated, I foresaw that I should pay; and in a panic I slid back and strove to steal away through the crowd.

I reached the door in safety, and even the head of the stairs. But there a hand gripped my shoulder, and the steward thrust his face, white with rage, into mine.

"Not so fast, Master Plotter!" he hissed in my ear. "If your hide does not pay for this—if you are not lashed like a dog until life is out of your body! If for this I do not—"

"By the Queen's command," said a quiet voice in my other ear; and a hand fell also on that shoulder.

The steward glanced at his rival.

"He is the Bishop's man!" he cried, throwing out his chest; and he gripped me again.

"And the Bishop is the Queen's!" was the curt reply; and the stranger, in whom I recognized the man who had delivered the dog to me, quietly put him by. "Her Majesty has committed this person to the Cardinal's custody until inquiry may be made into the truth of his story. In the meantime, if you have any complaint to make you can make it to his Eminence."

After that there was no more to be said. The steward, baffled and bursting with rage, fell back, and the stranger, directing me by a gesture to attend him, descended the st and, crossing the courtyard, entered St. toine. I knew not now what to expect fr him; nor whether, overjoyed as I was such a deliverance, I might not be cour a worse fate in this inquiry, so grim and cretive was my guide's face, and so much that somber dress—which gave him so what of the character of an inquisitor— to the mystery of his silence. Howev when we had crossed St. Antoine and tered a lane leading to the river, he hal and turned to me.

"There are twenty crowns," he sa abruptly, and he placed a purse in my ha "Take them and do exactly as I bid y and all will be well. At the Quai de No Dame you will find a market-boat start for Rouen. Go by it, and at the Ecce Ho in that city you will find your wife an hundred crowns. Live there quietly, and a month apply for work at the Chancer it will be given you. The rest lies with y I have known men," he continued, wit puzzling smile, "who started at a des that Chancery and lived to rent one of great farms."

I tried to find words to thank him.

"There is no need," he said. "For wh you have done, it is not too much."

And now I agree with him. Now—tho his words came true to the letter, and day I hold one of the great farms on a s ond term—I, too, think that it was not much. For if M. de Condé won Rocroy his side in the field, the Cardinal on that won a victory no less eminent at court which the check administered to M. Beauvais—who had nothing but a good pr ence and collapsed like a pricked bladd becoming within a month the most disc ited of men—was the first movement. Wit a month the heads of the Importans—as Bishop's party were christened—were prison or exiled, and all France recogni that it was in a master's hand, and that mantle of Richelieu, with a double port of the royal favor, had fallen on Mazari shoulders. I need scarcely add that, lo before, he had been happy enough to reco and restore the true Flore to his mistres arms.

THE END.

# THE DARK STRANGER.*

### BY JOHN R. MUSICK,

### Author of "Mysterious Mr. Howard."

["THE DARK STRANGER" was commenced in No. 3. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CLAUDE AND TOM AS FILIBUSTERS.

CLAUDE MORTON and Tom Coleman remained in California nearly a year after Walker left for Nicaragua. Tom was continually grumbling because Claude refused to go with the first party of filibusters. But Claude assured him there was plenty of time. He insisted on waiting until a new government was fully established, and then the taint of outlawry would be removed, and honorable men could support it.

"But all the glory of conquest will be over," Tom declared.

"There cannot be much glory in an unlawful conquest, Tom. Have you heard from Teresa since the capture of Granada?"

"Yes."

"What does she say?"

A troubled look came over Tom's face as he answered:

"She doesn't say much about it, and I be hanged if I know whether she is in sympathy with the invasion or not. In her last letter she said something about going to Guatemala."

The winter of 1856 came, and it seemed as if the gray-eyed man of destiny was firmly fixed in Nicaragua. Those who had murmured at his usurpation ceased to do so any longer, and the government seemed running smoothly enough. The newspapers published on the Pacific coast were enthusiastic over the new Eldorado. Nicaragua was described as the land of eternal sunshine, the gem of the New World, the picturesque, the delightful, and earth's only remaining paradise. A coffee plantation was offered to every emigrant from the United States who would become a citizen of the new republic.

The United States authorities no longer attempted to prevent emigration to Nicaragua. Doctor Thomas had organized a Nicaragua colonization society in San Francisco and was sending men by the hundred to join Walker. He did a thriving business. There was just a little effort on the part of the colonizationists at concealment. The men who really went as soldiers for Walker took passage as returning Californians. Arms and ammunition were shipped in boxes and barrels marked potatoes. Had any effort been made, the matter could have been ferreted out. England was blustering, as usual, and made some grim threats, but did nothing, so that the world had come to the conclusion that the Walker governm had come to stay.

No one believed this more than the y young miners, Claude and Tom. Du the early part of the winter of 1856 '57 they suddenly and unexpectedly ope a rich deposit, which in a few weeks m them both wealthy men.

"Now, Claude, I have enough," said T on Christmas Day, when he counted out dust, amounting to quite twenty thous dollars. "It's more than I expected wh I came, and I am going to quit."

"Are you going to leave me, Tom?" Cla asked, with a sigh.

"Yes, I am going to San Francisco, a will sail from there to Nicaragua."

"And your dust?"

"Well, I shall take it to San Francis exchange it for coin, take a thousand fifteen hundred dollars, whatever I c conveniently carry with me, and leave t rest subject to my order. But what are y going to do, Claude?"

"I don't know," Claude answered, wit sigh. "I am just about as well off at o place as another, and it makes little dif ence to me what I do."

"Come with me, then."

Claude was not hard to persuade, a that night, when Missouri Jack came their shanty and had declared his int tions to try Nicaragua once more, he be to think seriously of going himself.

"When will you start, Jack?" Cla asked.

"In a week or two. Boys, I've struck streak o' blamed hard luck. My diggi don't pan out. I can't make a raise here seems, an' my Nancy 's waitin' fur me come home all th' time."

"I thought your mine was paying pre well, Jack."

"So 'twas, a while back. I had seve ounces o' dust, but a feller came along wi a new-fangled game, an' he got my gold."

"You were to blame for that, Jack," sa Claude. "With your experience in li you ought to know better than to put up a new game."

Jack passed his fingers through h tangled locks, and changed the huge qu of tobacco from one cheek to the other he answered:

"I 'spect I am, but I've got my wea ness. I kin no more see a new game a not buck et, than a bull kin look et a r flag an' smile."

Claude and Tom said something about going in the way of temptation, and Mi souri Jack thought that was all ri "back in th' States," but "out here in th wilderness ye run agin temptashun ev step ye take."

"But, boys," added Missouri Jack, "I made up my mind t' go t' Nicaragua knowed Gineral Walker when he wuz h

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an' he wuz white, lemme tell ye. Ye kin believe everything he sez. A coffee plantation iz offered t' every one that'll come an' be a citizen. Now, coffee don't grow everywhar, an' I'm a-thinkin' maybe I could send fur Nancy t' come t' Nicaragua. I'd about ez soon live thar ez anywhar. True, et's a leetle bit warm, ye know, but I reckon et's all right arter a feller gits uzed ter it, ye know.”

“Jack, we have about made up our minds to go ourselves,” said Tom.

“Whut? Hev ye? Bully!” and Missouri Jack brought his hard fist down on the table with a resounding whack.

“Yes, Perkins and I have some notion of going.”

“When ye goin' t' start?”

“We will go to San Francisco next week,” said Tom.

“I'll be with ye.”

The three sat until a late hour, discussing the expedition and laying plans for the future. Even Claude showed some interest. In due time they all three sold their claims, packed up their clothes and valuables, and set out for San Francisco on three horses, driving four pack mules before them. Here they exchanged their gold dust for coin and disposed of their horses and pack mules. They then called on Doctor Thomas, the president of the Nicaraguan Colonization Association. The doctor was in his office, with some six or eight others, talking in his even, low tones and earnest manner. There was just the least shadow on the doctor's brow, but by an effort he cleared it away when asked what the latest news from Nicaragua was, and answered:

“Oh, it is serene! All is quiet and peaceful, gentlemen. Do you wish to go to the colony? I assure you there are golden prospects there for young men of ability.”

“Wall, pilgrim, that's jist what we want,” put in Missouri Jack.

Doctor Thomas opened a large book and glanced over it. It contained a long list of others who had been sent.

“The colony is growing very rapidly,” he said, “but there is room for a few more.” Then he glanced at a large map of Nicaragua, and added: “Colonel Fry, with about seven hundred men, is at the Castillo Rapids, General Walker and General Henningsen are at Granada, and there are small detachments at Virgin Bay, Leon and other places.”

“Are the people in Nicaragua satisfied with Walker's rule?” Claude asked.

“Perfectly, I assure you, sir.”

“Wall, how soon do I git my coffee farm?” asked Missouri Jack.

“Just as soon as you get there and it can be set apart for you.”

“I don't keer where Gineral Walker, Henningsen, Fry nur none o' them bigbugs iz, I jist want t' know whar my farm iz,” Missouri Jack added.

“You can locate your farm anywhere you wish on this map,” said Doctor Thomas, pointing to the map before him.

“Won't thar be danger o' any one jumpin' my claim?”

“No. We have a list of claims here. But it is better to go there and see the plantation you are selecting.”

This was the final decision of all. They entered their names in the large book of the emigration society, and receiving their final instructions, were about to go, when Doctor Thomas remarked:

“I suppose you are all well provided with arms?”

“We have revolvers, knives and rifles.”

“Yagers and ammunition will be furnished you,” said the doctor, “but it is well to be supplied with pistols.”

“Will there be any fighting?”

“Oh, no, no, no; there has been none, but in a frontier country one had always better be prepared, you know.”

“Wall, if it comes to a scrimmage, I reckin we three air old hands at th' business,” declared Missouri Jack. “We ain't goin' t' turn back t' th' tempest fur any set o' yaller skins in th' world.”

“Oh, there is no danger—none at all,” declared the doctor; “but in a new country arms are essential, you know.”

It was March 15, 1857, when Claude, Tom and Jack sailed in the *Orizaba* for Nicaragua. The steamer had a great many passengers bound for New York and New Orleans, and it was supposed that all were destined to some port in the United States.

“Say, Claude,” Tom remarked, joining his friend on deck the second day out, “we are not the only recruits Walker will have.”

“Have you found others?”

“Yes, there's six in one crowd, five in another and four in another.”

“Fifteen besides ourselves, eighteen in all?”

“Yes. Don't it seem to you, Claude, as if all this was covered with a great deal of unnecessary mystery?”

“There is something strange about it,” Claude admitted. “Did you talk with any of the men?”

“Not at first. They didn't seem to care to talk about it. I at last told 'em we were to land at San Juan Del Sur, and they said they were going to land there also.”

The filibusters soon hunted each other out, formed each other's acquaintance, and composed a sort of a secret brotherhood during the remainder of the voyage. The *Orizaba* stopped at Acapulco and took on coal. Several passengers went ashore, and among them two or three of Walker's filibusters. One of these—who for some unaccountable reason had been nick-named “Eleven-yards”—went to Claude on his return, and said:

“I guess from what I heerd on shore we're goin' t' hev some excitement when we git there.”

“Why?”

“Say that Walker is at war with Guatemala and Honduras.”

“We heard nothing of that in San Francisco,” Claude answered.

“I heard some rumor about it, but didn't pay much attention to it.”

“Are they fighting in Nicaragua?”

“That is what we heard.”

“Do you believe it?”

“No. Even if there is a revolution, it won't amount to much.”

So the matter was dismissed, and in due time the *Orizaba* landed at San Juan Del Sur. Eighteen as brave young Californians as lived went ashore and declared their allegiance to Walker.

“Have you come to join Walker?” asked the officer of the post.

“Yes, sir.”

“He is besieged at Granada.”

“Besieged!” cried the astounded Claude.

“Yes, sir. The Guatemalans, Hondurans and Nicaraguans are besieging him now in Granada. Your services will be needed. The steamer *Virgin Bay* will start with you in an hour.”

At the end of that time, Claude, Tom and their companions were on board the little steamer, going to join the noted filibuster.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### FLETCHER BRINGS HALLIE ASSURANCE THAT HER FATHER LIVES.

It is strange how unforeseen circumstances draw people whose destinies are the same to a certain point, be it ever so remote on the globe. We have seen how fate drew Claude Morton and his friend to Central America just as it was on the point of a terrible political upheaval. At the same time the young gold-seekers were considering the question of joining their fortunes with those of Walker, powerful influences were brought to bear to induce his sweetheart to make a journey to the same country.

Many weeks and months had passed since she had received the startling information that her father still lived. Not only was she assured that he lived, but that her lover was living and in Nicaragua. Poor Hallie, sometimes believing, but more often doubting the story, passed her time in praying, hoping and doubting. If she knew he was alive, she would go to him. She had no money, but she would raise enough by some means if she was only certain. Then she reasoned that it was impossible for him to be living, and tried hard to forget him.

But then, she asked herself, what object could any one have in trying to deceive her? The story of her father a captive, like Banquo's ghost, would not down, and, despite all her efforts to forget it, it would come to her mind. It could be no part of any one's plan to extort money from her, for she was penniless. Her life became one perpetual doubt and misery. Great as was her anxiety on account of her father, it was not equal to her anxiety on account of her lover. Claude had occupied her thoughts almost every moment since he left her on the night he struck down Fletcher in her presence.

“Oh, Claude! Claude! shall I never see you more!” she sobbed again and again, wringing her hands in anguish. Yet day after day passed, weeks grew into months, and a year passed, and she had not gone to Nicaragua, nor was she any nearer to her journey than at first.

She had almost given up all thought of going, when the subject was revived by the arrival of a letter from a sailor, who stated that he had been in Nicaragua, and had heard there was a prisoner among the Mosquito tribes or mountain brigands whose name was Tyler. He said the prisoner was formerly a New York merchant; and if she could have put any reliance in his story she must have reached the conclusion that he was her father. She had never heard the sailor's name before she read it at the bottom of the letter. The writer admitted in the beginning that he was a stranger, but said that he had read the story of her father's mysterious death several months before in the New York papers, and thought this man might be he.

“That seems reasonable,” she sighed, as she let the hand which held the letter drop at her side. Tears welled up in those azure eyes until they overflowed and trickled down her pale cheeks.

“Oh, Heaven!” she sobbed, “I am the most miserable person in the world! What shall I do? What shall I do?”

Had she had the money she would have started for Nicaragua. But she was penniless, and her aunt, who had grown colder and colder toward her of late, would be the last person in the world whom she could approach on the subject. Mrs. Weathergate found her niece a burdensome expense without any prospect of a profitable return in the future; and she soured her own temper trying to conceive some plan by which she might get rid of her. Hallie appreciated the humble position she occupied, and decided to take some steps toward earning her own livelihood.

She had an excellent voice and a splendid musical education. She went to the principal of the conservatory of music of which she was a graduate, and asked him if he could not recommend her to a few pupils preparing to enter the conservatory in need of a tutor.

“Certainly, my dear mademoiselle,” the French principal answered. “I have six or seven or maybe more charming pupils who need a tutor to give special instructions.”

She rented a room and a piano in the conservatory building, and, returning to her aunt, announced her intention.

“Well,” said Mrs. Weathergate, her brow gathering into a mass of wrinkles, “it's well enough to learn to make your way early in life, for you will have to do it some time, and maybe right soon.”

“That is what I thought, auntie dear, and I am glad you are not displeased at my course.”

Mrs. Weathergate could not say whether she was pleased or not. Avaricious as she was, she had a streak of aristocratic blood in her veins, and she was not quite certain that the menial position of her niece would not, to a certain extent, degrade herself and daughter. But she was not going to prevent Hallie from earning her own livelihood. It would take an expense off her hands. If Claude Morton had not gotten himself in trouble, she thought, he might have stayed in New York and married Hallie, and this disgrace could have been avoided. Thinking of Claude caused her mechanically to ask:

“I wonder what has become of that Claude Morton?”

“I don't know, aunt,” Hallie answered, truthfully, yet sadly.

“He's managed to keep out of the hangman's grasp so far, but they will get him yet.”

“I know he is not guilty of that crime.”

“How do you know he is not?”

“He told me that he was innocent.”

“Do you suppose that he would admit to any one that he had murdered his uncle?”

“I know he did not—”

“You know nothing about it,” the aunt snappishly returned. “Why, of course, if he was guilty he would lie about it. It's silly to say he is not guilty. But he manages to keep out of the clutches of the law some way.”

Hallie, who had long since learned not to argue with her aunt, became silent. In a few days she had her class of pupils, and every day she went to instruct them in vocal or instrumental music. The principal of the conservatory occasionally looked in to see how she was getting along, and was so highly pleased with her manner of instruction that he had serious thoughts of offering her a position in his conservatory.

One afternoon, as she was walking slowly down the street toward her aunt's house after her day's work was over, she came suddenly face to face with Mr. Howells. She had not seen the grave lawyer for months. He stopped and fixed his steel-gray eyes upon her in a manner that seemed to pierce her through. For a moment the two stared at each other in silence.

“Young woman, I called to see you,” he said, in his slow, measured tones.

“Why did you wish to see me?” she asked, in astonishment.

“It has been a long time since I met you, and I wanted to talk with you about Claude Morton,” he added, in a low whisper.

“Claude—Claude? Do you know anything of him?” she asked.

“I have heard of him.”

“Where is he?” she asked, clasping her hand to her beating heart.

The lawyer turned his cadaverous features up the street, and glanced to the right and left.

“This is no place for us to talk, Miss Tyler. Come to my office in the morning at ten.”

He gave her his card, and she hurried home. Hallie was too cautious to tell her aunt of her intended visit to the lawyer. She passed an anxious, sleepless night, wondering what Mr. Howells had to say to her. When morning came she was quite nervous.

Ten o'clock found her at Mr. Howells's office, but he was engaged, and she had to wait what to her seemed ages before the stout old client with corrugated brow and pursed lips took his departure. Then she was shown into the private office of the somber-looking lawyer.

“You said you had heard of Claude, Mr. Howells. Where is he?” she asked.

“Don't count too much on this, Miss Tyler. The information may not be authentic.”

“What is it? Give me the information.”

“I learned that he was in Central America. A person at San Juan de Nicaragua saw him land there from the brig *Francis*.”

“Brig *Francis!* Is not that a New York vessel?”

“Yes.”

“Could not one ascertain from the captain of the ship if he went in it?”

“Yes. I have seen the captain of the brig.”

“What does he say?”

“On that voyage, two young men sailed with him. One was named Tom Coleman and the other was I. S. K. Perkins. Coleman was very nervous and very anxious to get to San Juan, and they say they went into the interior at once. This Tom Coleman was Claude Morton.”

“No, Mr. Howells, you are mistaken,” interrupted Hallie. “Coleman was a friend of Claude's and not Claude. The man called Perkins might have been he.”

“But they say he was cool and indifferent.”

“That would be Claude's manner. He knew he was innocent and had nothing to fear. I am certain that if left to himself he would not have run away.”

“It wasn't necessary,” said the lawyer, after a short pause. “We all thought so at the time, but had I known what I know now and had I seen him, he would not have gone.”

“Would you advise him to come back and stand trial?” she asked.

“M—yes,” answered the lawyer, passing his hand over his cadaverous face, on which the beard of two days' growth grated with a rasping sound. “I have been trying to find him for months, but the foolish boy has shut himself up. Now tell me, has he ever corresponded with you?”

“No, sir.”

The searching glance of the lawyer which followed this question almost frightened her. She thought that perhaps, after all, the lawyer was trying to entrap her into telling where her lover was. Though it was Claude's uncle, it was Howells's client who was murdered, and Howells had the reputation of being loyal even unto death to a client.

“Do not be afraid to trust me, Miss Tyler. It is of great importance to Claude Morton that he return home.”

“He would be tried and hanged if he did,” she answered, her eyes filling with tears.

“No, no, my dear, he would not. I know the case. I know he is innocent, and can prove it.”

“Then why did you let him go away, Mr. Howells?”

“I did not know as much about it then as I know now, and, furthermore, I never saw him after the death of his uncle.”

He questioned her carefully in regard to Claude's whereabouts, and gained much information which she little dreamed at the time she was imparting. He forced her to admit that she had heard indirectly from Claude, who was then in Central America. She left the lawyer with hope once more in her heart. She thought:

“Claude in Central America, and father possibly alive! I will earn money enough teaching to go to them. I will search river, mountain and vale to find them.”

Her success as a tutor brought her many pupils from the best families in the city. Among them were the children of Mrs. Hendricks, one of the wealthiest ladies in the city, noted for her kindness and benevolence. The children spoke so highly of their new teacher that the mother was induced to form her acquaintance, and fell in love with her at once. Hallie, in her mourning robes, which she had never cast aside, looked very pretty. Her golden hair, pale face, and large, deep blue eyes were in strong contrast to her black dress.

The kind lady saw that she was in deep sorrow, and with a heart melting with compassion, and a strong desire to do her some good, she invited her to her house and offered her a home with her own family. Hallie paid her frequent visits, but could not impose on her generosity by making her house her permanent home.

One day she was astonished by receiving a note from Mr. Fletcher, in which he said:

> “I must see you again on important business. I have gained new information from Nicaragua.”

She asked him to call at her aunt's house that evening. He came, and entering the parlor where she was, asked:

“Have you heard nothing from your father since I saw you?”

“No, sir.”

“Why have you not gone to him as he requested?”

“There are two reasons, Mr. Fletcher. The first and main reason—I have not the means. Second, I put very little reliance in these stories.”

“Miss Tyler, I know that your father lives, and I have come to convince you of the fact.”

“How?”

“Would you know his handwriting?” She answered that she would, and he continued: “Since I saw you last I met with a returned Californian, who, while coming through Nicaragua, met one of those native negroes called Sambos, who wander about the country. The negro gave him a writing, which he said was from a man held by a band of robbers, under a man called Somoza. The captive induced the negro to take this writing and give it to the first white man he saw. The man who received it brought it to New York, gave it to me, and here it is.”

He pulled from his pocket a piece of palm leaf, on which was faintly inscribed with a stick dipped in the red juice of some kind of berries:

> “I am George Tyler, who was captured by Somoza, escaped and retaken— Held for ransom. Have a daughter, H—”

Many of the words were faded out and illegible, but enough remained to distinguish the chirography. She gazed on the piece of palm for several moments, and then said:

“It is—it is father's writing.”

“Miss Hallie, let me assure you, your father lives.”

“I believe it. Oh, Heaven, I know it!”

“If you would only consent to let me assist you, I would willingly go with you to find him.”

“Did you say that five hundred dollars would pay the ransom?”

“Yes, yes; let me advance the money.”

“Wait and see—wait and see!”

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE AUNT'S ADVICE.

Hallie Tyler was not yet willing to accept a favor that might place her under obligations to Fletcher, even to save her father.

She detested the wretch, and could not trust him under any circumstances.

"Oh, Heaven help me! What shall I do?" she asked. "How can I help my father?"

"By taking my advice," he answered. "I will lend the money to you, and your father can repay it."

"Wait; give me time to think." She rose and walked back and forth across the room in a distracted manner. She almost fancied she could hear the groans of the captive. Mr. Fletcher rose to go, and, turning once more to her, said:

"Miss Hallie, before I go away, let me assure you of my friendship. I could assure you of more than friendship if I dared. But not now. I have money, and am willing to spend it rescuing your father—"

"Then go and bring him back," she interrupted.

"There is but one way it can be done," he answered.

"Which way?"

"You must go yourself."

"Why need I go?" she asked.

"I cannot explain. That is the decree. Somoza will not give your father to any other person than yourself."

She wrung her hands and sobbed:

"How cruel! Oh, how cruel!"

"There is no doubt that your father lives, and you can save him if you will. I have the means, and offer them to you. Will you accept them?"

"Let me think!" cried the almost distracted girl.

"Consult some one; consult your aunt," suggested Fletcher, and, bidding her adieu, took his departure. His advice seemed good, and she determined to give it consideration. Long she pondered over her father's strange imprisonment, and at last, having formed a plan of action, went to bed.

She was at the conservatory as usual next morning, and when the day's work was over, went to the home of Mrs. Hendricks. Hallie had determined, come what might, to act independently of Ambrose Fletcher. She knew there was no benevolence in his proffers of friendship. He might be telling her the truth about her father; the writing on the strip of palm convinced her that he lived, yet he should not know what course she would take.

Mrs. Hendricks was at home and delighted to see the young lady in whom she was so greatly interested. Although she had some fashionable callers, she took occasion to see that Hallie was not slighted.

"Mrs. Hendricks, I have called upon you on what may seem a very strange errand," she explained. "You may refuse my request. I would not blame you for doing so, yet I am in duty bound to make it."

"Why, my dear child, what are you talking about?"

"You have heard the story of my father?"

"Yes, yes, I believe I have heard something, but, really, I can't recall what it was now."

"On his return from California he was attacked by robbers, and reported to have been robbed and murdered."

"Oh, dear, how terrible!"

"I have just learned that he is not dead—"

"Oh, joy!" interrupted the enthusiastic Mrs. Hendricks.

"They say he is alive and a prisoner, either among the mountain robbers of Nicaragua or a tribe of negroes called Sambos."

The good lady elevated her hands in surprise and horror. As soon as she could regain her breath, she asked:

"Why does he stay with such people?"

"I said he was a prisoner; he is held for ransom."

"And all these years! Mercy, how he must have suffered! My dear child, why don't you send the ransom for him?"

"I am advised I must take it myself."

"Then, why don't you do it?"

"I have not the money."

For the first time Mrs. Hendricks realized the position of the fair maiden, and opening her eyes wide with astonishment, said:

"My dear child, why did you not come to me sooner with your story? All this time I have known you, you have kept silent about it, and your unfortunate father a prisoner. We might have had him released months ago. How much is the amount required?"

"I have been told that five hundred dollars is the amount required for his ransom."

"A mere trifle. But you will require something for your expenses going and coming; say five hundred more. Would a thousand answer?"

"Oh, Mrs. Hendricks, I had no thought of asking for so much!"

"You had better take a thousand, my dear. It would be a terrible thing to be in a heathen land and out of money. You had better let me give you a check for a thousand." The widow opened a small escritoire and took a check-book, a gold pen in a holder of pearl, and continued: "Let me make it a thousand, my dear; I will not consent to less!"

"Not now, Mrs. Hendricks. I cannot start for a few days, and I don't want to carry so much money about me."

"You are right, dear; but you must remember, when you get ready to go, that you are to call on me for a thousand, or more, if you want it."

"Thank you, my dear friend," said Hallie, seizing her hand and kissing it, while tears and sobs checked further utterance.

"There, there, dear, it is all right. I have plenty, and you shall not be made to feel that you are under obligation to me for so small a sum. But excuse me now. I have some friends waiting for me in the reception-room, and I must go and see them."

Hallie left the Fifth Avenue mansion with a lighter heart than she had known for months.

"I have the means to rescue father," she said, as she tripped gayly down the street. "I will consult with Aunt Hannah about it, though my going will not be dependent on her decision. Oh, Claude! Oh, father! I trust Heaven to find you both!"

On her arrival at her aunt's house, she found another letter, post-marked Greytown, Nicaragua. She opened it with a trembling hand, and discovered it was from Monsieur Le Clerc, the dark stranger who had been such a mystery to the people of New York. She read:

> "Your father is still a captive, but cannot live long unless relief comes. Can't you bring some money and save him? I would willingly advance the money myself; but unfortunately the revolution in Nicaragua, in which place I had large interests, swept away all I possessed and left me a pauper."

"Father still lives!" she murmured. "I wonder if Claude lives also. Tom Coleman will know. I will write to him, and have him answer me at Greytown."

Hallie wrote the letter, but it did not reach California until after Claude and Tom had left with Walker's filibusters. The most difficult task, Hallie thought, was to obtain the consent of her aunt. Her aunt, notwithstanding she was earning her own livelihood, had become so intolerant that Hallie had decided to leave her house, even if she did not go to Nicaragua.

That evening she knocked timidly at her aunt's door, and was admitted. Mrs. Weathergate was alone, with a cold, damp cloth on her head, and her smelling-salts in her hand. It was not an encouraging symptom, but Hallie felt it a duty to consult her before she took such a journey.

"Well, Hallie, what is the trouble now? Given up your pupils?" asked Mrs. Weathergate, her face expressive of displeasure.

"Not yet, aunt. I may have to do it, though."

"You may? Well, it will be no more than I expected," and she applied her smelling-salts to her nose. "The work is irksome, I have no doubt, and you are not one to like it."

"You don't understand me, aunt. If I remain in New York, I will keep my class—"

"Why, you don't think of leaving?"

"With your permission, I will go."

"Where?"

"To Nicaragua."

The old lady dropped her bottle of smelling-salts, which was smashed into fragments on the hearth, while she stared in opened-mouthed wonder at her niece.

"Why, what on earth are you going to do in that outlandish country?" she asked.

"Sit down, aunt, and I will tell you some wonderful news!"

The widow almost forgot her headache, and, dropping into a chair, stared at her niece and asked:

"What is it?"

"My father is alive."

The widow started up with a scream, as if she had seen a ghost. Hallie quieted her as well as she could, and proceeded, bit by bit, to tell her how she had learned that her father lived.

"And that dark stranger who used to come to see you has found him?"

"He has. He promised when he left to send me the details of his death. He has done much more; he has sent me the glorious assurance that he lives."

"Well, what are you going to do?"

"I am going to Nicaragua and ransom him."

"You?"

"Yes, I. I feel sure I can find him."

"But to do all that requires money," returned Mrs. Weathergate, fearing she would be called upon to supply the means.

"I know it, aunt, and I have made arrangements to get the money."

Mrs. Weathergate heaved a sigh of relief when she ascertained that the money was not to come from her pocket. She was just a little curious to know, however, from whom she was going to obtain it. Hallie made sufficient explanations to satisfy her curiosity, and asked her advice. Mrs. Weathergate sat for some time thinking the matter over. Her niece was not only a burden whom she would willingly be rid of, but her pretty face was a constant barrier between her daughter Celia and Mr. Henry Cline, a young gentleman whom any mother with a marriageable daughter might regard as a good catch. If Hallie was out of the country, she hoped Celia might yet win Mr. Cline.

Hallie had never intentionally stood in the way of her cousin, for while Cline was an estimable young man, Hallie was true to her absent lover, and could think of none other. Mrs. Weathergate at last, after mature deliberation, said:

"Well, if it was my father, I would ransom him just as soon as I could."

"Thank you, Aunt Hannah. I only awaited your advice."

When the niece rose to retire, her aunt asked:

"Hallie, does Henry furnish you with the money?"

"No."

"Is he going with you?"

"I am going alone, Aunt Hannah, and I want no one to know of my intentions."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 12.]

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# IN SEARCH OF GOLD.*

## BY COLIN MIDDLETON,

Author of "The Fool of Destiny," "Innes of Blairavon," etc.

["IN SEARCH OF GOLD" was commenced in No. 52. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

### CHAPTER XXIII.

### AN OLD ACCOUNT SETTLED AT LAST.

DUNCAN was buried with all due honor, and Howard reigned in his stead. They felt Duncan's loss very keenly, but at the same time Ivor could not help feeling that Howard would regard his new position more as one which had come to him naturally than as one which had been created for him.

"Yes," old Courtenay had said a few days after the funeral, "Duncan was a good man, but there is no reason why Howard should not do equally well. He is steady and a gentleman, and, curiously enough, that goes a long way with this lawless crew."

At any rate, matters went on just as they had before. The mine yielded gold in a continuous stream, and six months after the bank at Vaughan had been virtually robbed by Löwe, the new and larger machinery which they had intended to buy at that time was bought and was in the course of erection.

"Our output will be trebled," said Courtenay, "and our profits trebled at the same time."

"I am sure I hope so," said Beausire.

"There is no need to hope; it's a certainty. 'Gad, how I wish I was young again. This wealth, like everything else in the world, has come too late; not for you two, though."

Ivor did not say anything, but thought that perhaps, even for him, it had come too late. Beausire's mysterious visits to Castlemaine continued with unremitting regularity, and he was now subject to periods of hopeless despair, alternating with corresponding periods of the wildest spirits.

One Monday he returned later than usual, and was followed about a quarter of an hour later by Anatole, who came up to the house just as the men were "knocking off" for dinner.

"Well, Anatole, what is it?" said Ivor. "Glad to see you here."

Anatole shook his head, and his face assumed an even more lugubrious expression.

"I am not well."

"What is it? Liver out of order?"

"No, my liver is in order; it is something more tender; it is my heart."

"You don't mean to say you have fallen in love with some one else when you have that beautiful wife?" said Beausire.

"*Hélas*, no," sighed Anatole, "it is not I who have fallen in love—it is she; she has a most capacious heart."

Ivor felt a strong desire to laugh, but he restrained himself in time, and said:

"Come, Anatole, tell us all about it."

"You will remember, gentlemen, how on board ship she would make love with any one—with every one. I thought that when we should marry all that would change, and that she would love me alone; but"—here he threw up his hands in despair—"it is unfortunately not so."

"What does she do?" asked Beausire.

"What does she do, monsieur? What does she not do! She makes love—what you call ze flirt—with every man who comes to the hotel, and when I expostulate, she says it is good for business; that if she liked she can have five—ten pounds for a kiss, and when I tell her that I do not like to see other men kiss her, she calls me *cochon*. It is true it is good for business: the profits of the hotel have increased by twice since we come there, and the proprietors have given me more salary, but money does not cure the pain here."

Anatole laid his hand upon his heart, and Ivor was compelled to turn away in order to avoid laughing openly.

"But have you done nothing in the matter?" said Beausire.

"But, yes; I go to her on the knees and implore her to love me and not those others, but she only says '*Cochon*.' Ah, she cannot understand the passion of a Frenchman!"

"If she brings custom to the hotel, and is faithful to you, what more do you want? A year ago the world contained nothing for you but her, and now you are discontented with her."

"No, no, monsieur, not discontented. I love the earth on which she puts her feet. No, not disconsolate, but only anxious to recover her love. She is so indiscriminate; she will make love to the gentlemen, and to the boy who blacks her boots."

"It is the nature of the animal," said Courtenay. "Look here, my young friend, do you see that?" Courtenay was carrying a thick stick in his hand. "Get one like it, and when she begins to flirt with these people, give her a good hiding; she won't like the hiding, but she will respect you for it. You have been going on your knees to her and petting her and begging and praying her instead of commanding. That's where you have made your mistake."

Anatole looked at Courtenay in horror and muttered:

"*Ces Anglaise!*" Then he said aloud: "Beat Lola! But, sir, it is impossible; you cannot have seen her. She is as beautiful as"—he paused for a simile, but finding none, continued—"one cannot find words for it—she is Lola."

"Well, if that is the way you look at matters, of course there is nothing more to be said; but it's the only way, you mark my words; unless you put your foot down firmly—she seems to have such a lot of love to spare—she will be going off with one of these young sparks one day, and then you will probably cut your throat or do something equally idiotic."

"Ah, that is it, monsieur, she has so much love to spare. We have no child; if we but had a child for her to love, all would be different."

Anatole, overcome by his feelings, put his head between his hands.

"Come, Anatole," said Beausire, "this won't do; you need not take Mr. Courtenay's words *au pied de la lettre*. What he means is that you must be firm with her. Don't submit yourself to her, but show that you are the master. It may cost you pain, but it will be the better in the end."

"You think so, monsieur?" said Anatole, his face brightening visibly.

"I don't think at all. I am sure of it."

"Then I will try."

"That's right; now you bustle along into the kitchen and see if you can't make us an eatable omelet. You have not forgotten your cooking, I suppose?"

"Every Frenchman cooks by inspiration," answered Anatole, proudly.

In the late afternoon he went back to Castlemaine much relieved by his consultation with the men who he said were the only two friends he had in all that *triste* country.

After a couple of months the erection of the new machinery was completed, and the day was fast drawing on when the first crushing of the new machines would be ready.

Courtenay was in ecstasies over the machinery. There never had been—according to him—a finer crushing machine seen in the colony. It had more than three times as many stamps as the old one, and a babe in arms could work it.

Ivor and Beausire strolled in and out of the shed as the crushing was going on, and Ivor at least loved the thud of the stamps on the quartz. It all seemed to him to say so clearly that it was working for him—and Gwen, for hope is born even of despair. The roar of a blast furnace, the hum of the loom, the thunders of an iron foundry—these alone constitute the poetry of industrial life.

The crushing was at last finished, the amalgam disintegrated, and a shining mass of gold lay ready for Ivor to take into Castlemaine.

A strong guard was placed around the specimen-house that night; but Courtenay said that it was really unnecessary, because the bushrangers had left that part of the country, to all appearances.

The night passed uneventfully, and at six on the following morning Ivor was on his way to Castlemaine with the gold.

He rode a five-year-old "waler" which, in order to justify the statement that the exception proves the rule, was as quiet and docile as a lamb.

He carried the gold in saddle-bags attached to the front of the saddle.

At that early hour of the morning the track from Gwynne's Creek into Vaughan was entirely deserted. The itinerant Chinese green-grocer would not come "loping" along it until three or four hours later, so Ivor had no companion save the ubiquitous parakeet and an occasional laughing jackass which mocked him from a tree-top.

Twice or thrice a silver-snake which had been basking in the sun slipped quietly out of his path into the underwood.

Ivor trotted along in good spirits, and began whistling to himself as he rode.

He was thinking that he would need but very few more of these journeys before he could go home and settle matters with Gwen. The track opened out some distance from Vaughan, and he was alone with his thoughts. They went back, as they often did, to those old schoolboy and college days when he had spent all his holidays with Gwen at Glanwythian—days when he never remembered to have been bored or weary, when he was entirely happy from dawn till sunset.

He stopped whistling, and the horse, in sympathy with his master, dropped into a walk. A low whistle on his left, answered by another some two hundred yards away, awoke him from his reverie.

He looked up suddenly, the horse pricked up his ears and broke, unbidden, into a sharp trot. Ivor scanned the road right and left and saw nothing, and being only a mile from Vaughan, shook his horse up into a canter, and in five minutes had pulled up opposite the inn, where he called for a glass of milk and biscuit, and had his horse's mouth washed with oatmeal and water.

Leaving Vaughan behind, he trotted

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through some fairly open country for two or three miles and then the road entered the bush again.

By this time the rays of the sun were becoming powerful, and Ivor, heated by trotting, allowed his horse to drop into a walk again.

Soon he came to the junction of the Castlemaine and Fryerstown roads, and turned up to the left.

About half a mile farther on he reached the foot of an exceedingly steep part of the road called Breakneck Hill. It had got its name in the early days of the colony, when there was no railway, and when the squatters and pioneer miners used it, to drive or ride from Castlemaine to Fryerstown, Chewton or Malmesbury. In those early days the average squatter or miner was in a state of happy intoxication when on his homeward way, and the result was that the negotiation of Breakneck Hill, in a buggy which had no brake, or on a horse which objected to being spurred in the chest, was not always entirely successful, and, in consequence, many a man was picked up on the hill itself or at the foot of it with his neck or back broken.

On nearing the ascent Ivor allowed his horse to saunter along as it wished. He had thought of walking, but it was now so intensely hot that he was too lazy to do so. The horse could have a long rest in Castlemaine. As it was, he changed the reins from the left hand to his right, and fell into a reverie as the horse began slowly to mount the hill.

On either side of the road was a dense wall of gum trees, underneath which the scrub was thick and tangled. Here and there a narrow horse-track intersected the trees.

The air was drowsy, and Ivor was far away from Australia, wandering on the oak-clad banks of the Usk, which he could hear murmuring at his feet. The horse sauntered slowly on, and a faint breeze stirred the trees on the right and made him prick up his ears.

Almost at that instant a horseman, riding a magnificent black stallion, appeared as if by magic from the left of the road, and stood about four yards away, covering Ivor with a revolver.

"Your money or your life!" said the stranger, using the time-honored bushranger formula which never has changed.

Ivor instantly recognized the stranger as Löwe, and as quickly—by one of those sudden strokes of genius which seem to come to almost every one at some crisis of his life—made up his mind what to do.

On the apparition of the bushranger, Ivor's horse had started slightly, and Ivor gripped the reins.

As he was holding the reins in his right hand, he knew that if he made the very faintest motion to get at his revolver, a bullet from Löwe's revolver would be in his brain. He made no attempt to reach his own revolver, but ramming the spurs into his horse's sides and bending down to his horse's neck at the same moment, he rode straight at Löwe.

All this was thought of and done so quickly that the words of Löwe's challenge were scarcely out of his mouth before Ivor's horse was upon him. The report of a revolver rang out on the drowsy air, and Ivor felt a short, sharp twinge of pain in his left shoulder. Almost immediately a second report followed; but by that time Löwe's horse had been struck by Ivor's, and the bullet flew harmlessly over the trees, and Löwe's revolver was hurled out of his hand by the shock as he himself was shot half sideways, half backwards out of the saddle and lay on the ground. Almost at the same instant Ivor was hurled forward nearly into Löwe's arms.

Löwe's horse, recovering itself, bolted, snorting, into the bush, and Ivor's, startled, cantered a hundred yards or so up the hill, and there stopped and began to crop the grass at the side of the road.

Simultaneously Ivor and Löwe leaped to their feet and were at each other's throats. They struggled for the under grip, and were locked in each other's arms for an instant, to wrest themselves free the next and then rush together once more.

There was no chance of quarter here. Löwe *must* kill Ivor, or he would be hanged. In Ivor's breast there was no thought of mercy; for the moment he was turned into a wild beast thirsting for his prey. No sound broke the stillness but the labored breathing of the men as they fought for that grip which meant life or death.

As they were locked together, one could have thought that twin brothers were the combatants.

Ivor, perhaps, had the advantage; he was younger, and the hard, keen life of the last two years had left his muscles as firm as marble and his sinews like whipcord; this advantage was counterbalanced by the slight wound which he had received in his left shoulder, from which, although it was a mere superficial flesh-wound, the blood was pouring freely.

For ten minutes they fought for the mastery, and the hideous glare in their eyes told only too well that it was to the death. Ivor had no thought of taking his opponent captive. All the beast within him was roused; the savagery inspired by war, and the knowledge that he had at last a chance to square accounts with the man who had nearly brought him to the scaffold were too much for him. He would kill him if he could, and, moreover, feel no remorse for him.

Still, his was no certain victory, though the glare of hate in Löwe's eyes had turned to one of fury as he found himself practically on his defense, and unable to make any advance against his enemy.

He hissed in fury as they closed once more, and, like an animal, bit Ivor on the wounded shoulder. Ivor uttered no sound; he needed all his breath for this, his struggle for life or death. Over and over they rolled on the ground, and the twigs and brushwood around them were beaten flat and stained with Ivor's blood. Still neither had the advantage. With a snarl, Löwe had once more freed himself from Ivor's embrace, and at the same moment they had both leaped to their feet.

Löwe was panting, and the foam frothed around his lips; the glare in his eye had lost its intensity, and a hunted look in his face told Ivor that the fear of death was on him. Ivor's set face and blazing eyes told Löwe that there was no hope.

With a shriek and a cat-like spring, he leaped at Ivor, who, stepping back, tripped on a root and fell heavily backwards. In an instant Löwe was upon him and dashed his fist into his face. By a superhuman effort, when one might have heard his sinews crack, Ivor managed to get on to his side, and once more the two combatants rolled over and over on the ground, tearing at each other's throats and fighting for that grip which meant death. Löwe was now cursing and snarling like a dog, and, when opportunity offered, bit Ivor where he could—a wild beast at bay, with the desire of life which intelligence brings and which a beast can never feel. Once more they were on their feet, and the twisted face of Löwe would have made one think that he had gone mad. The foam, tinged with Ivor's blood, which lay on his lips and beard, added hideousness to his already distorted countenance. He continued to snarl as his breast heaved with his labored breathing.

Still the same implacable glare of hatred shone in Ivor's eyes as they moved round and round each other like tigers preparatory to springing.

Löwe at intervals uttered that short, sharp snarl as of an animal who was uneasy in his mind. His age and want of training—as compared with Ivor—were telling on him, and he knew that his only hope of safety lay in killing his opponent. He was uneasy; assuredly the fear of death was upon him.

Ivor, who was beginning to feel the loss of blood now, knew that he must make one supreme effort. Up till now he had thought of nothing; he had merely wrestled and fought with an absolute blind fury, which had not admitted of thought.

Now that the first flush of war was over, and he had—so to speak—fleshed his sword, he had recovered sufficient equanimity to allow of an attempt at thought.

He awaited his opportunity, and then dashed at Löwe, as though he would strike out at his chest.

Instantly Löwe's arm dropped to cover himself, and Ivor, who had only feinted, rushed in and got that grip for which he had been unconsciously longing.

With his left hand he gripped Löwe's throat and with his right he encircled his body, and then—half carrying him—he backed his victim quickly toward the fallen trunk of a tree. Löwe, whose face was turning black, and whose eyes were starting out of his head, tried vainly to disengage himself. Ivor's turn had come at last.

He pushed Löwe back until he got him as near the fallen tree as he thought right, and then, tripping him, he crashed him down on to the trunk. Just as he was about to touch the tree Ivor let go with his right hand, and Löwe fell, with a dull thud, on the small of his back, with Ivor on top of him.

There was a horrible crunching sound, followed by a sharp crack as Löwe's head jerked back with the impact, and Ivor knew by the sudden cessation of the tension in his enemy's body that he was dead.

Ivor rose and looked at the body of his fallen foe, and then sighed a sigh of relief and walked away.

He walked up the road to where his horse was placidly grazing, caught him by the bridle, and then sat down on a log by the side of the road.

He was utterly exhausted; he had for the first time in all his life put out *all* his strength—that which not one man in a thousand ever does at any time in his career.

He must have sat for an hour in that position—without thinking—in a state of utter lassitude. When he awoke to a sense of surrounding circumstances he found that he was crying.

During the whole time nobody had passed up or down the road. While that silent battle was in progress at the edge of the bush, no articulate word had passed the lips of either combatant, and there had been no witness of the conflict but the birds.

After about half an hour, a buggy came down the hill from Castlemaine. The occupant, on seeing Ivor's condition, pulled up, and handing the reins to the groom alighted.

"My dear sir," he said to Ivor, "can I do anything for you? Aren't you well?"

"Yes, I am all right, thank you. I was 'struck up' by a bushranger, and had a fight, and I fancy he got the worst of it. He is lying dead about a hundred yards down."

"Allow me to congratulate you. My name is Smith, a doctor in Castlemaine. If you will allow me, I will see to your shoulder there and your wrist."

Ivor's right wrist, where Löwe had bitten him, was still bleeding profusely.

After Ivor had been bound up, he and the doctor walked down to where Löwe lay. The doctor, on seeing him, started back, and said:

"Good Heaven! is he your brother?"

Ivor smiled as he answered:

"No, his name is Löwe; mine is Gwynne, of Gwynne's Creek."

"I know you by name very well, Mr. Gwynne. How did this happen?"

"I was taking in gold to Castlemaine. There it is in those saddle-bags, and he stuck me up, and we fought it out here with no weapons but our arms and legs."

The doctor examined Löwe carefully, and then looking up with a laugh, he said:

"You have managed things pretty well, Mr. Gwynne. Both his back and his neck are broken."

Ivor smiled grimly as he answered:

"We had an old account to settle. He nearly got me hanged in South Africa for a murder which he committed."

"If you will take my advice, Mr. Gwynne, you won't go on to Castlemaine to-day. I am going on to Vaughan, and if you will let me drive you, my groom will ride your horse back."

"I think you are right, and I am very much obliged to you, I am sure. I hardly feel equal to going on."

So Ivor got up into the doctor's buggy, after taking the precaution to put the saddle-bags there first, in case the temptation should be too much for the groom, and arrived at Gwynne's Creek in the early afternoon, to the consternation of Beausire and Courtenay.

When Ivor told Beausire that he had killed Löwe, Beausire gave a great shout of delight, and tried to hug Ivor, as he said:

"You have got rid of your old man of the sea at last, old chap."

"If you will excuse me, gentlemen," said the doctor, "the best thing that Mr. Gwynne can do is to go to bed, or else we shall be having him in a fever."

So Ivor went to bed and slept off the remembrance of the most hideous event in his whole life.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 12.]

# WILLFUL PENELOPE.*

### BY EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS,

**Author of "A Conqueror of Fate," "Little Kit," "At a Great Cost."**

["WILLFUL PENELOPE" was commenced in No. 48. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

## CHAPTER XXX.

MARCIA took the note from the maid with a curt word of thanks.

"Who brought this?" she asked, as she glanced at the writing, turning deathly pale as she recognized it was from Denis.

The maid answered she did not know; but she answered clumsily, and Marcia immediately fathomed there was something behind her manner. As a matter of fact, Penelope had given the note to the maid when she answered her bell, and had told her to take the letter to Mrs. Latimar, adding:

"Do not mention that Lady Susan is here."

Alone, Marcia paused before opening her letter. Her face had grown a curious whitish-gray, and two bright patches of color showed up for a moment on this dull surface. Her eyes were fixed and hard, her heart beating wildly.

The anger of a few hours before was smoldering in her heart. She had rarely been so angry before. She had felt absolutely mad in that moment: she did not remember all she had said; but Denis's words, Denis's face, Denis's strong touch on her wrist at one particular moment—these stood out before her in clear, strong colors. Marcia would never forget them. She had been unable to control herself or to play her self-appointed part any longer. Her jealousy could bear no more constraint. She had flung everything to the winds, and let forth the stream of her venomous hatred for Penelope at last.

She could see now, as she sat staring before her, the agonized look that had come over the man's face as she spoke Penelope's name, the tender eagerness with which he would have shielded that name from attack.

She conjured up, bit by bit, the scene that had passed between them. She felt once again the frenzy of impotent rage, in that she could force no word, no retort from his white lips; and then she had again the sense of savage joy when she realized she had roused him at last, and he was about to answer her. How those cold, few words of answer burned into Marcia's brain! Would she ever forget them?

The unutterable scorn, the contempt, the weariness, the horror of her; and the love unspeakable, the reverence, the adoration that filled his whole being for that other.

In that moment Marcia's mean spirit recognized its master. She cowed before Denis's quiet, dignified wrath. She winced at his cold contempt; but the shame within her was burned up instantly and utterly when he spoke his love for Penelope.

"If I live a hundred years," Denis had said; "if I have to endure a century of such a hell as you have made of my life this one year we have been together, you can never rob me of my greatest joy—the remembrance of my love, a love so pure, so great, so beautiful that not even daily contact with you can bring a shadow upon it. You have tortured me often enough, Marcia, with senseless jealousy; you have held me unworthy and untrue to my honor; you have credited me with doing you terrible wrongs. I have borne all that in silence, but now I speak out; for the future I will stand this sort of life no more. I am prepared to do my duty by you in the fullest sense of the word. I will consent to forget the past, to forgive it also; but one thing I will never forgive: If you once venture to say one single word against Penelope, if you offer her any gratuitous insult, or endeavor in any way to harm or trouble her, I have done with you. No duty on earth will keep me to you, and I will have no hesitation in declaring to the world the reason that I have in separating myself from you. This is my absolute determination: it rests in your hands, and yours alone, whether I must carry it into action."

Marcia's reply had been a burst of wild laughter and a torrent of vituperation against Penelope. She had not stopped to choose her words. She had said the most terrible—the most horrible things one woman could say of another.

When she had ceased to draw breath, Denis had put his hand on her arm for an instant.

"And you are my wife—my wife!" he had said, in slow, deliberate tones. Then slowly and distinctly he added: "God be thanked that my child is dead!"

He had looked into her face for an instant, and then he had loosened his hold, and had turned and left her.

She was used to this method of his. Sometimes he had endured the whole of her fit of fury in complete silence. Marcia had not given his manner much thought. She was in no mood to discriminate or qualify.

Had Denis gauged for a single instant the absolute condition of her mind, he would not have acted as he did. He only foresaw the usual ending to a rather worse scene than usual.

Marcia would fall into a sullen state; she would in all probability be too ill to go to the ball, and possibly she would have to go to bed instead. There was always a terrible reaction after such intense excitement.

He determined suddenly to leave her for a time. He had, indeed, come to the end of his tether. He could endure no more. He felt if he remained with her as he was now, he might be even tempted to forget that she was a woman, and do what would be a lasting stain on him for life.

He would go away for a little while, and the thought came to him, as it had come to Lady Susan, that perhaps such an action might have a beneficial effect.

So far he had resorted to no drastic measures with Marcia. It was against his nature to hurt any one, so he had borne with his life as well as he could; but now—now, with the memory of her cruel, horrible words against Penelope searing his very brain, Denis felt he must sever himself, if only for a short time, from his wife, and so impress upon her that she had at last gone too far, and that his determination to permit no more was firm and unalterable.

Marcia had not imagined such an action. She had come to Thicket Croft armed with one intention, filled with one desire—a craving to be alone with Penelope to give vent in some way—how, she could not for the moment determine—to the fury of hate and savage jealousy that filled her every vein.

All at once she had conceived the idea of spending this night of the ball under Penelope's roof. She had no desire to go near the dance. Her object in coming to Lady Susan's had been more than well achieved. She had been eager to know the truth exactly about Denis and her cousin; the knowledge had come to her sooner than she had expected. The truth was even worse than her fevered brain had imagined.

Now there remained only the gratification of causing some pain, some discomfort, some mortification to Penelope in punishment for all she had done, directly or indirectly.

She had no definite plan of action as she drove through the glorious spring sunshine to Thicket Croft, her face set in sullen anger, her restless eyes seeing nothing of the beauty about her; yet with quick cunning she foreshadowed the possible events of this particular evening.

Thicket Croft would be practically empty after dinner; servants, of course, there would be, but these did not count; what Marcia dwelt on was the absence of Penelope's friends. Madge Riley and her sister would be sure to go early to the ball and return late.

"If I could stay there—if I had some excuse to be with her alone—if something could happen to detain me!"

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This was the burden of her thought, and her cheeks flushed with a dark flush of excitement as she conjured up the satisfaction she would obtain from such a chance.

"I will insult her. I will make my words eat into her heart. I know her. I can make her suffer, and I will do it. I will shame her. I will draw her secret out and stamp on it. Denis can talk as much as he likes—he will never be even with me—he dare not do anything for her; his hands are tied. Let him even try to protect her! I will let all the world know what he does—and he will ruin her socially for ever."

A light had come into Marcia's eyes as she thought of all this; her plan of action was decided before she reached the gates of the Croft. She would pretend some illness, it did not matter what; it would be so easy to deceive Penelope, she said to herself with undisguised contempt. She would remain at the house all night; Denis would have to go to the ball; her illness should not be sufficient to keep him away. She would avoid any meeting with Lady Susan; it would be easy to go straight back to Latimar Court from Thicket Croft. Marcia knew she must be even lower in her hostess's estimation now than she had been before; she gave a little of her surplus hate to Denis's great-aunt. In the future she would never let herself be brought in contact with Lady Susan, that was very certain. She had used her for a purpose; that purpose accomplished, Marcia would never, willingly, gaze on the old lady again. As it was, she could barely bring herself to be civil to her self-appointed hostess.

It was the excitement and a little nervousness as to how events would proceed that made Marcia seem so bright and almost genial on her entrance at the Croft. The accident was the result of a sudden determination; it had worked even better than she had anticipated. Marcia soon settled the question of Doctor Gregory; it was easy to pretend to some mysterious pain with a raw, ignorant country bumpkin, as she immediately designated the young doctor.

The sound of an arrival discomposed her for a moment, but only for a moment. She feared Denis might have come, and she had no desire that Denis should snatch her revenge, poor as it was, from her grasp at the last moment.

She soon learned that Denis had not come—doubtless he knew nothing of her supposed accident; in all probability he would not return to Lady Susan's until too late to get over to the Croft. His anxiety, if he felt any, would be set at rest by Lady Susan; but even if he did come, Marcia would have had her opportunity, and have made good use of it.

The note brought to her was something she had not anticipated. Her face was white to the lips as she read it.

"In all probability," Denis wrote curtly, "it may be some time before we shall meet again. You have gone a step too far, Marcia; I can bear with you no longer—the horrors of my daily life are too much for me. I don't know whether you think I spoke lightly to-day when I said I should separate from you; but if you did think so, you will see you are utterly mistaken. I gave you the terms of my final determination. You deliberately chose to disregard them; you said things this afternoon I will never forget—never forgive. There can be no question of future life with you.

"I desire there shall be no scandal—there will be none if you act as I direct, and for once use some self-command, and conduct yourself with dignity. I have made excuses to Lady Susan. I go to London direct, and will write to you from there to-night, placing before you the best course for you to pursue under the present miserable circumstances which you, and you alone, are responsible for.

"I have done my best, Heaven knows, but I am only human, and to-day the chain has broken; I can endure no longer. Had you given me half a chance, had you shown the faintest shred of a woman's heart, you would not have found yourself in the position you will hold from this date forward in my life."

As Marcia ceased reading, she trembled from head to foot; a deep red flush spread over the pallor of her temples and surrounded her eyes; the paper flitted from her nerveless grasp and fell to the ground. She did not heed it; she was going over and over the one thought, the one bitter, maddening thought. Denis was gone—Denis had left her—Denis was lost to her forever!

A thousand pictures of the future danced before and dazed her eyes. She rose to her feet, heedless of her supposed accident, and stood looking about her in a curious, strained fashion, as with the air of one who seeks some glimmer of light in heavy darkness.

All at once she gave a sharp laugh and flung out her arms with a wild gesture, and then she began to walk to and fro, her eyes going round and about her in the same odd fashion, her fingers tightly interlaced, her lips set in a smile. A sudden sound outside made her stand still for an instant; then swiftly, with an indescribable cunning, she was back in her chair in the same invalid attitude as before. The flush had gone from her brows; she was very pale, and her lips were dry and white. The footsteps passed her door. She crouched in the chair and stared at the letter lying tossed on the hearth-rug.

"Denis is gone—but she is here! Denis is gone—he can't protect her; he can't save her. He is very clever, oh, very clever; but he is not so clever as I can be. To-morrow he will come back; he will think of her and be afraid. Yes, to-morrow he will come, but he has forgotten to-night. He has gone, and she is here. She will be with me alone. She shall hear me speak, and she shall answer to me for her sin. She shall answer to me—answer to me!"

The wild frenzy of thoughts melted into a decisive action as the footsteps returned. The door opened and some one came in. It was Mrs. Warriner.

She withdrew softly as she saw Marcia leaning back with closed eyes.

"She is asleep," she whispered to Penelope, who was just outside the door. "It is the best thing for her. Come away, Pen; you look so pale and tired. You have no more color than a sheet. You have not seen Madge's frock. She has spread it out for your approval. You can be with Mrs. Latimar all the evening when we are gone. You can give us half an hour now."

Penelope followed mechanically. That strange chill was on her heart, and as Mrs. Warriner spoke, she shivered. She did not know why, but she felt all at once an intense longing to ask her friends to forego the ball and stay with her this night. This was only a momentary weakness, however, and she shook it off swiftly and determinately; but the chill on her heart could not be shaken off; it remained and threatened to stay a while longer.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

Penelope gave the best attention possible to Miss Riley's ball-gown, but she found it difficult to be her natural self. On other and ordinary occasions she would have flung herself into the matter most heartily. She was essentially feminine, and she had her weakness for all pretty things and surroundings.

"I advised pink," Mrs. Warriner said, as the delicate, diaphanous garment was held out at arm's length and criticised and admired. "Madge had a mania for nothing but black of late, and although she looks very well in it, I thought a light color would be pretty for a change."

Madge affected to think the frock would be a failure, or, rather, that she would be a failure in the frock. She put a bunch of the soft drapery under her chin and made a face at her reflection in the glass.

"Makes my brick complexion a little more bricky," was the remark; "doesn't it, Pen?"

Penelope tried very hard to concentrate her thoughts.

"I think you look charming, Madgie. How are you going to wear your hair?" she said, and, despite the effort, she was glad to rush into the subject of the ball toilet, eager to escape any questioning or comment on Marcia or Denis or Lady Susan, or having anything to do with them for the moment.

"Oh, the usual way."

Madge replaced her dress on the bed and looked over her fan, gloves and shoes. Everything was ready for putting on.

"I am awfully sorry Doctor Westall cannot come," Mrs. Warriner said, after awhile. "I am sure it is as great a disappointment to him as it is to you."

"Mrs. Langridge is always having a fit of something at the most inconvenient times. She might have waited until to-morrow," Madge cried, with her impetuous wrath, seating herself on the hearth-rug in a favorite squatting attitude.

"Did you ever hear such a heartless little individual as she is, Pen? I don't believe she has faith in any one, except perhaps the clergy as represented in one or two favored individuals."

Madge flung a cushion at her sister, and even Penelope found herself laughing at the scarlet, confused face before them.

"If Mr. De Burgh is at the ball, you will give him all sorts of kind messages from me, won't you, Madge?" she said, and then the smile gave way to a sigh—the thought of Harold De Burgh brought up such a host of memories—visions of the past that could never come again: The delicate, tender sweetness of her mother's presence; the days when Lucie had been always near with her gentle, practical sense, patience and industry.

How long, long ago those days seemed! Could it be only little more than a short year and a half since that time at Waveton, that merry, laughing, youthfully intolerant, mischievous time when she had skimmed the rocks like a bird, and had teased and quarreled and been reconciled to the big, handsome, boyish young man whom her girlish heart had learned to love immediately, and her girlish, reckless pride and will had determined must never be her love? The thought of Harold De Burgh was closely knit up with these memories that were so sad and yet so beautiful. She would never forget the rector's true friendship for her mother, nor the tender kindness he had shown her throughout their intercourse. Little pictures of the past rose before her vividly—the day of her accident, when he had driven her home so carefully; his aid in helping her to disguise the truth from her mother; the comfort his refined ministrations had given the dying woman; the dozens of small acts he had performed for her; then, at the last, that letter in which he put his love before Penelope, and prayed her to be his wife.

It had pained her often to realize she must have hurt him in the short refusal she sent; yet, when she had heard from him again, there had been nothing but kindness and tender thought. Penelope had a strong yearning for Harold De Burgh to come now again on the scene. Surely such a man, such a nature, could be able to cope with the magnitude of trouble and misery that spelled the meaning of marriage between Denis and Marcia Latimar.

She rested back in her chair, and covered her face with her hand for an instant—tears that were irrepressible sprang into the blue depths of her eyes. She was acutely unhappy, unhinged beyond measure, and full of uncertain dread. Lady Susan's recital had struck deep into her heart. The fact that Denis had gone away, even though only for a very short time, was almost a blow; to her it was a proof indisputable that the reality was worse than the stories that had come to her. The burden must be, indeed, weighty that could thrust Denis from his duty and his path of honor and right.

The girl's heart hungered over the man in his suffering; all the old reproach and remorse awoke in this moment. She took to herself the whole burden and blame of his misery; she saw his ruin, his troubled life, as her doing and hers alone. She sat so silent, and in such an attitude of pain and mental distress, that Mrs. Warriner, with that instinct of delicate tact that marks the true woman, rose and went softly away, giving Madge a sign to follow.

Madge did not follow, however; she misread Penelope's sorrow. Her heart had a dull, dead pang in it in that instant; but to falter in love and loyalty was something that Madge Riley did not understand.

"She loves him, after all," was her quick thought. "Poor little Pen, and this is the meaning of her changed looks and sad eyes! It will be hard to try to forget him—very, very hard; but if it is to give Pen happiness— And then—then he loved her! What shall I do? Can I speak to her?" A second's hesitation, and then Madge took her resolution. "Yes, I will, I must. What is gained by waiting?—And—and it will help me a little to help her."

Penelope suddenly felt two arms about her, and lifting her pale, tear-stained face she looked into a pair of true eyes—not unshadowed with sorrow maybe, but carrying a stanchness and affection indescribable.

Madge spoke out the burden of her thoughts quickly, abruptly, as was her fashion, yet gently, too. Penelope did not follow her at first, for her head was beginning to ache now in a dull, desperate way; but as she caught the meaning of her friend's words she thrust weakness, regret, remorse and old memories aside.

"Madge, dear," she said tenderly, "how good you are! What a true, kind, sweet heart! Do you know what a sacrifice you are offering me, dear Madge? I am not fretting over what you think. My feelings for Harold De Burgh have never changed. I like him. I honor him. I trust him. I am grateful to him. He is a man I am proud to call my friend. But love!" She shook her head with a despairing sigh that was almost a moan, then went on quickly: "It is not I who love him, is it, Madgie? What of your own heart, dear? I read your secret long ago. And I am so glad, so very glad, for you will make him happy. Put all this thought of me out of your mind, dear Madgie. Between Harold De Burgh and me there is nothing but a true, a sincere and I hope a lasting friendship. Believe me, that is the absolute truth."

"I wanted to see you happy, Pen, and I thought—" Madge paused an instant. "You have something on your heart," she said, when she spoke again, "and I imagined perhaps you were regretting."

"Ah, yes, I am regretting!" Penelope cried, with sudden passion. "But not that, Madgie—not that! No, don't ask me any more to-night. Another time—soon, perhaps—I will tell you all my little story. What a silly little story it will sound! And yet it has had such big results—such a terrible end!" Penelope brushed her eyes roughly with her hand. "Don't let us talk any more of this. I shall spoil all your pleasure, and give myself a headache that will not improve matters."

Madge sat down on the floor and stared at her friend.

"I have a very good mind not to go to this ball to-night," she said deliberately. "I hate leaving you alone with that cat."

Penelope was conscious of a thrill of vague pleasure even in hearing this suggestion; but she had not the slightest intention of permitting any such action on her friend's part.

"My dear Madgie, what an idea! What *do* you suppose will happen to me?"

"I don't know. She is a cat," was the answer, given with uncompromising frankness.

Penelope's brows contracted. She had lost all spirit or desire to defend Marcia, at least for the moment.

"Besides, she has no love for you," Madge went on, as she clasped her arms about her knees. "In fact, I am quite sure she hates you well."

"Madge, you must not say such things, dear, please—*please!*"

"Oh, I am not casting any invidious distinction on you. Mrs. Latimar scatters her hate with a generous hand. Pen, I can't understand how she comes to be in the least related to you; and though I was never quite fond of Mrs. Rochdale, she is something very much nicer than her daughter."

"Poor Aunt Julia!" Penelope thought to herself sadly. The future that loomed so blackly ahead for Denis Latimar and his wife would have much pain and bitterness for Mrs. Rochdale; of that Penelope was quite sure.

"Honestly," Madge went on, "I would never have given Marcia credit for developing into an individual with so much character, even of such a disagreeable kind. I regarded her as a good-looking nonentity—the sort of handsome, well-dressed girl one meets every day of one's life in London; but Marcia is not at all ordinary. I said once to Doctor Westall that she gave me the creeps, she was so odd, almost uncanny; and all the answer he gave me was one of his grunts. You know how he does it; sort of settles any question right off without more ado. So I shut up and said no more, though I feel pretty certain he quite agreed with me."

"Marcia is much changed," Penelope said in a pained voice. "I—I scarcely know how to understand her. It must be her health, Madge. It—"

"Fudge! Nothing of the sort! It is temper, pure and simple. She has a detestable temper, and she is jealous beyond every sort of description. There is no need to look further for cause of her hatred of certain individuals. For instance—" Madge put her head back critically and surveyed her friend. "Really, it is not at all surprising she should find a little cause to be jealous when she looks at you, my pretty, pretty little Penelope!"

Penelope started to her feet.

"Oh, don't, don't, Madge!" she said, with sudden entreaty, such a flood of new, painful thought arose swiftly and suddenly in her mind at these words. Suppose Marcia should have—

She broke the thread of thought instantly and with sudden relief. No, this horror, at least, would be spared her—must be spared her.

Marcia's manner showed as yet she had no inkling of the truth. That was very evident; for Penelope had learned enough by this time to know that when Marcia's suspicions were aroused she did not permit herself any constraint or put any barrier on her tongue. Therefore, since her manner with her cousin was so nearly affable and pleasant, Penelope felt most surely that as yet Marcia could know nothing of the love that had lived in her husband's heart, nor of the great love that was always for him, could he put out his hand and meet it.

It must be her task, Penelope decreed in these swift-changing thoughts, never to let Marcia know the truth; not for her own safety, but because she dreaded that any further pain should arise in this unhappy marriage through her.

The conversation between Madge and herself came to an abrupt ending here, for lights were brought, and Mrs. Warriner came in to report she had been in to see the invalid, who stated she was very sleepy and would like to be left quiet for another hour or so.

"So there is no need for you to bother about her just yet," Madge said. "Come along! Let us go and eat some dinner, and then you shall sit there and watch me dress as a great treat, unless"—Madge looked keenly into the big blue eyes—"unless you really, honestly and truly would rather we did not go. Now do speak up, Pen. We are not babies. We shall most probably have more balls in the future than we shall care to attend. We can easily do without this one."

Mrs. Warriner joined her views with her sister's.

"I wish Doctor Westall had come, and then Madge would have had a chaperon, and I could have stayed with you," she said, when Penelope received all this kind thought with an absolute refusal to accept it.

"You must not dream of staying away. Why, everybody will be so disappointed! And to think of wasting the beauties of that gown on the desert air of Thicket Croft! Perish the thought, Madgie, dear. Don't look at me as if you imagined you saw two gigantic bears about to crunch me up." Penelope was forced to laugh at the expression in Miss Riley's eyes. "Come along! Suppose we go and discuss the dinner, as you proposed. I believe I feel hungry."

A statement not founded on fact; for when they sat down to the dainty meal spread for them, Penelope could not swallow a mouthful.

Her two friends were troubled about her. They could not quite follow or understand her most evident anxiety and restlessness, not having the faintest idea of what was pressing on her mind. Finding, however, that she shrank from any question or remark, and also that they would give her genuine pain if they insisted on remaining away from the ball, they said no more about it, and turned the conversation on general matters.

Penelope went immediately after dinner to see Marcia. The room was in half light, and Mrs. Latimar was evidently sleeping, for though her cousin spoke her name in a soft, questioning way, there was no answer, and no movement from the figure in the chair.

Penelope withdrew again noiselessly. It was a relief to her to be spared much speaking with Marcia under the existing circumstances, and she dreaded so much lest her cousin should begin to talk of Denis, and confide any of her imaginary wrongs to her.

Penelope felt she could not bear that. It would be beyond her in her agitated, miserable condition of mind. She was glad to steal away to her own room and sit down and rest for a few minutes in the dark, leaning her beating head against the cozy cushions of her favorite chair, shutting her eyes and trying not to think, if possible.

She experienced, as all such natures as hers must experience in moments of intense excitement, that thought became an absolute demon, a something with an almost personal individuality that tortured her brain, poured fresh matter perpetually before her to be sorted out, questioned, solved;

it racked her unceasingly, and made her weary head whirl and her spirit faint within her.

She hoped in this moment, almost despairingly, that Marcia might sleep on for some time. She felt sure that such a burst of rage and fury as Lady Susan had described must have exhausted a frame already weak and faltering, and she was glad, too, apart from her own feelings, to think that the pain of the accident, which Marcia had described as so acute and distressing, should have been soothed into oblivion, if only for a short time.

By and by the rustle of skirts in the passage warned her that her guests were ready to depart. They were starting in good time. Penelope, very wan and weary, went downstairs to see them off. With many a tender word and kiss, Madge confided her two canine treasures to Pen's charge, and gave the two dogs due notice they were to take great care of the mistress of the house, and guard her from all harm.

Madge looked very bonny in her pink gown, and Mrs. Warriner was a charming foil in black, with some gleaming jewels.

Penelope stood in the doorway with a dog, disconsolate and miserable, on either side of her, and waved her hand as the carriage rolled away.

Most of her household had begged permission to go over to the scene of the excitement and gaze at the grand folk going in. Naturally, Penelope had been delighted they should go, and gave them hearty permission. As she shut to the big door, however, and heard the sound reverberate through the old house, she shivered with sudden swiftness as with cold, and gave a nervous glance around.

Downs, the old butler, was pottering still in the dining-room; she could hear the clinking of glass and plate. Dannie, the dachshund, heard it, too, and faithlessly trotted off to see what he could find, while Billy, the bull terrier, mournfully made his way to his proper mistress's quarters, there to repose with one of her slippers as consolation till his quick ear caught the first sound of the carriage wheel returning from the ball.

Penelope went in search of the medicine Doctor Gregory had promised to send. Downs had none to give her; it had not arrived. She spoke a few kind words to her uncle's faithful follower, and then turned to go up to Marcia. She had heard, with a sudden contraction of the brows, that every maid and servant, with the exception of the housekeeper, Kate's mother, and Downs, had gone off to the ball. Under ordinary circumstances Penelope would not have cared whether the house was full or empty, but to-night the very atmosphere of her home seemed changed. In an odd, indescribably uneasy manner, all Madge's jests at Marcia came back to Penelope and took a deeper significance. She tried to shake off the feelings that were upon her, but could not succeed in doing so. With a weary sigh she resigned herself to the inevitable.

She had had a long, exciting, troubled day. She must bear with the results of such a day, and accept her mental condition as being natural, though it was excessively disagreeable.

The lights were still low in Marcia's room when she opened the door, but Mrs. Latimar was not asleep this time; she was sitting up in her chair, toying, rather than eating, with some food the housekeeper had brought up to her. Penelope shut the door and advanced to the fire with some gentle word of inquiry.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 12.]

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## WHY PEOPLE GROW OLD.

A woman ninety-three years of age is the secretary of a woman's club in Lansing, Mich. She is a relative of William Cullen Bryant, and one of the most charming of companions. She is fond of society, keeps well up with the times, is sprightly, accurate, dainty, and every way admirable.

There are many reasons why women grow old. The tendency to slump is one of the first indications of approaching years. This is a fatal error, and unless broken up at the outset ruins the figure, the style and the habits of the individual.

The prim, trim, natty and up-to-date elderly woman is scarce indeed. If she is not antiquated and stuffy, she is likely to be frivolous and giddy, and when a woman of years gets to do that, the best thing she can do is to make her will and die suddenly. Age need not be glum or too sober, but it should always keep its dignity and remember that childish manners are but an exceedingly poor veneer to cover the inroads of time.

There are many instances where women of seventy or eighty years have been the queens of society and the centers of attraction wherever they appeared; but it is perfectly safe to say that these were not the giddy, butterfly, fluttering women who monopolize all of the time and seem to absorb all of the air in the apartment. They have, without exception, been gentle, quiet, dignified, good-hearted and clear-headed women who wore their years so gracefully that no one thought of how many decades they represented.

The secret of becoming old age is to accept the situation and attract to it as little attention as possible. There is no need for people of sixty or seventy to act or feel old. With reasonable care for their health and a determination to make the best of everything, the days slip by so easily that they have but few marks behind them.

## THERE IS HOPE FOR ONE AND ALL.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Though this life be dull and dreary,
Though the day be dark and long,
Struggle with the gloom and darkness,
Let thy heart be brave and strong;
Fear not trials—shun not danger,
But upon thy manhood call,
For the Word of God doth teach us
There is hope for one and all.

In the busy marts of commerce,
Where the tyrant—*gold*—doth reign,
Where honor, virtue, love and truth
Are buried 'neath the mountain—*gain;*
Even there with words of kindness,
As from us they gently fall,
We may save them yet for Heaven,
For there 's hope for one and all.

If we meet a fallen daughter—
Maddened, wronged by guilt and shame—
Wound her not with stern reproaches,
Nor call her by an evil name;
But speak to her of God's forgiveness,
Bid her hark to mercy's call,
Show her from God's holy record,
There is hope for one and all.

Then let 's struggle on forever,
Keeping one great truth in mind—
That alone by deeds of kindness,
We can save from sin mankind;
And when death shall overtake us,
When the shades of night shall fall,
We may hope that God, our Father,
May have mercy on us all.

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## THE BICYCLE BRAKE.

The agitation about brakes on wheels continues unabated. It is rarely that such a tempest in a teapot is stirred up as has been raised by the proposals to compel every rider to use a brake.

If this succeeds in New York City, efforts are to be made to enforce the same ordinance in all of the cities of the Union.

The agitation is characterized as a determined attempt on the part of brake manufacturers to compel the use of something that wheelmen not only do not need but do not want. A public hearing was had in New York on this subject, and wheelmen of all classes were present. According to the resolution, all bicycles must be fitted with brake attachments before June first.

Among those present was a trick rider of great reputation. This man testified that he lost one leg because he trusted to a brake. An expert stated that placing the toe of the shoe against the fork of the machine, and pressing it upon the tire, was the best brake that could be used. It was also declared that there were no grades within the city limits that demanded the use of a brake. Other wheelmen of experience protested against what they termed encroachment on the rights and privileges of wheelmen. A great deal of feeling has been shown at what appears like unwarranted and unnecessary anxiety about the use of these attachments. It has been shown that a large portion of the accidents to bicycle riders had happened to those who used brakes on their wheels.

As has been said before in the *Ledger*, the expert rider has no need of a brake on his wheel, and this attachment is exceedingly dangerous in the hands of a greenhorn. In a number of cases the nervous grip on the brake has sent the rider headlong over the machine, causing much more serious injuries than were likely to occur without it.

Almost all of the new wheels are built without brakes, and many are so constructed that a brake is out of the question. It is therefore very easy to see what an injustice it would be to put wheelmen to the expense and trouble of having their bicycles refitted to satisfy somebody's cranky notions.

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## THE WEATHER BUREAU.

For the first time in the history of the weather service the hurricane signal went up during the memorable storm that occurred in the first week of February; and it flew for several days because of the danger to shipping and the impossibility of controlling water craft in such uncertain weather.

It was a strange and novel sight to see New Jersey towns with flooded streets, and business blocks standing ankle-deep in back-water and flood-tide. Railroads were submerged and trains were stalled with the water surging under the wheels and sweeping through the fire-boxes until only blackened cinders and wet ashes remained. Half a dozen trains were held for hours because the fires were out, and entire villages indulged in traffic and travel by means of boats and hastily improvised rafts.

Even these were handled with the utmost care, because with the rapid eddying of currents there was no telling where they would bring up or what disasters might befall them.

There is no doubt that a great many lives were saved and much property kept from destruction by the wonderful foresight of the officials of the weather service. It is amazing the accuracy with which these people predict the coming of storms. For many years the weather prophet was without honor in his own country, but, of late, it can be said of him that he is one of the most valuable aids to commerce and the guarding of those who go down to the sea in ships.

## The Household Department of the New York Ledger.

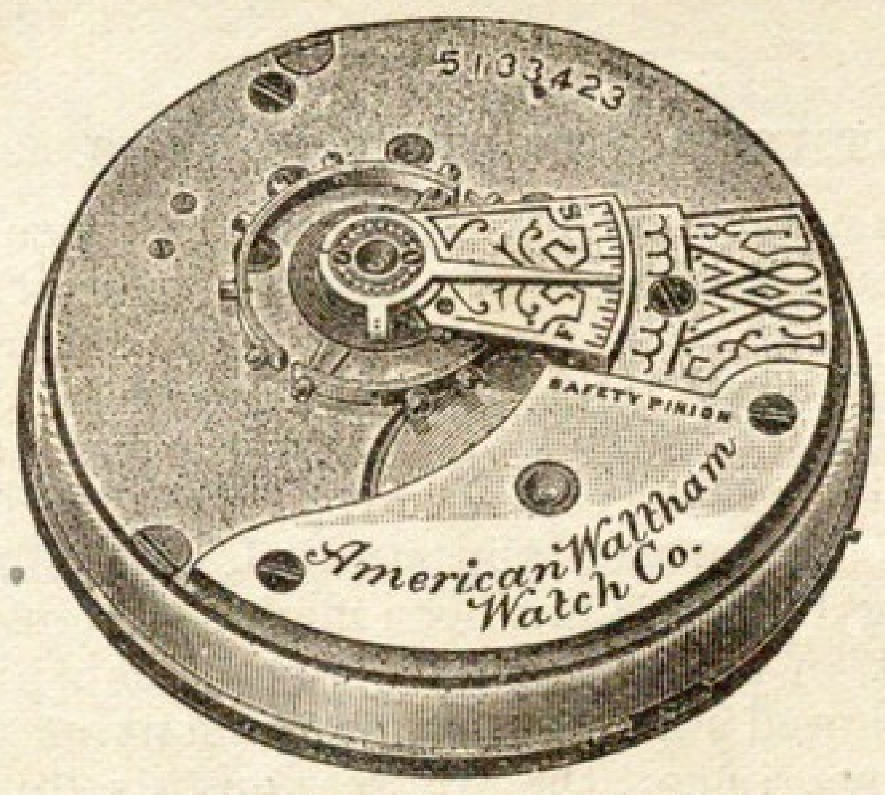
**From time to time, when we can secure real bargains, we will offer them to the LEDGER readers in our Household Department. The following offer of watches suitable for every member of the family is a sample of the kind of bargains we will give our readers.**

### A FAMILY OFFER.

**Cheaper Than Ever.**

**By reading this article, even those readers who do not want a first-class watch at any price will be interested in learning the phenomenally low prices at which the LEDGER can sell goods.**

The *Ledger* will purchase for its subscribers Waltham and Elgin watches at the prices which jobbers charge the trade. Every one knows the excellence of these watches, and that they are the best in the world for anything like the money; but many are compelled to purchase foreign counterfeits simply because they cannot purchase the genuine without paying two or three prices. The *Ledger* has selected watches which represent the best value for the money of any watches yet made. The *Ledger* is the Great Family Paper, and it proposes to furnish watches suitable for every member of the families represented on its list of subscribers.



### WATCHES FOR FATHERS.

**Elgin or Waltham, Men's Size.**
**No. 99—$4.50.**

No. 99 is a handsome Elgin or Waltham Watch, men's size. The works contain 7 jewels, compensation balance, safety pinion, stem winding and setting apparatus, and all the greatest improvements. The case is Open Face only, and is made of a composite that wears just like silver. The case is made by the Keystone Watch Case Co., and guaranteed in every respect. The case is made on the thin model plan.

**Open Face Gold-Filled Watch, Men's Size.**
**No. 101—$9.85.**

This is an Elgin or Waltham movement, open face, with beveled-glass crystal, warranted to wear like solid gold for fifteen years; stem wind and stem set, containing seven jewels, compensation balance, safety pinion, patent Breguet hair-spring hardened and tempered in form. This watch is a great bargain and a perfect timepiece. The case is handsomely engraved. We send this watch, delivery guaranteed, to any of our readers in this country for $9.85. Hunting Case, $3.00 extra.

**No. 102—$13.50.**

The American Watch Co., at Waltham, has made a reduction in the price of its 15-jewel movements. We take the first opportunity to give our readers the advantage of the new price list, and offer the following described bargains.

No. 102 is an open face, 15-jewel in settings, compensation balance, patent Breguet hair-spring hardened and tempered in form, white porcelain dial, stem wind and pendant, set in a gold-filled, engraved or engine-turned pattern case. Warranted to wear like solid gold for fifteen years. We will send this watch to any address, delivery guaranteed, for the sum of only $13.50. $3.00 extra for Hunting Case.

**15-Jewel Open Face Silverene.**
**No. 103—$8.00.**

No. 103 is a 15-jewel American Waltham Watch, either nickel or gilt movement, containing fifteen jewels in settings, compensation balance, patent Breguet hair-spring hardened and tempered in form, white porcelain dial, stem wind and pendant set. Either Roman or Arabic characters. It is in a solid nickel-silver, open face case, with a heavy French-beveled plate-glass crystal. We will send this watch to any of our readers, postpaid, delivery guaranteed, for only $8.00.

At this price for an accurate timepiece no one need be without a watch.

**15-Jewel Open Face Gold-Filled Watch.**
**No. 104—$16.50.**

No. 104 is a 15-jewel American Waltham, stem wind and set, compensation balance, patent Breguet hair-spring hardened and tempered in form, white porcelain dial. Either Roman or Arabic characters. Hands of blue-tempered steel. This movement comes in a 14kt. gold-filled case, guaranteed by the manufacturer to wear like solid gold for twenty years. We will send this watch, postpaid, delivery guaranteed, for $16.50.

### WATCHES FOR MOTHERS.

No. 105 is a solid 14kt. gold engraved Hunting Case watch, ladies' size. The works (either Waltham or Elgin) contain eleven jewels, stem-wind and set and all improvements. This watch, like all the rest, is an accurate timekeeper and is offered at one-half the usual price. Sent by registered mail to any subscriber for $25.00. The retail price is $35.00 to $60.00.

No. 106 is the same as No. 105, but the case is gold filled; guaranteed to wear twenty years. Price, delivered to any subscriber, $16.25. The retail price is $20.00 to $30.00.

### FOR THE DAUGHTERS.

**Solid 14kt. Waltham or Elgin Watch.**
**No. 107—$21.00.**

No. 107 is what we designate our Ladies' Special. It is a beauty in design, and as good as it is pretty. It is in a case of solid gold, guaranteed to be 14kt., U. S. Assay. It is engraved in selected designs of approved French pattern, for the French still lead the world in the production of the beautiful in engraving as well as painting. The movement, or works, as sometimes called, is American, of either Elgin or Waltham make, as the purchaser may prefer. In the production of timekeepers these two firms are not surpassed by any when accuracy and durability are considered. Hence we use no foreign movements. As to which of the two factories named turns out the better Watch we will not attempt to say, because the best judges maintain that no difference can be detected, and that the selection must be a mere matter of fancy. They are the same price.

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## MOVING THE NAVAL ACADEMY.

A proposition is on foot to move the Naval Academy from Annapolis to Newport. A number of reasons are given for this change, all of which are plausible from some point of view.

The Academy at Annapolis was opened in October, 1845. There are many people who may not be aware that for a number of years this Academy flourished in the Atlantic Hotel at Newport. This building was bought by the Government for this purpose, and from 1861 to 1864, while the war raged through the South, the Naval Academy carried on its classes and conducted its business at this great watering-place. But late in 1864, after all trouble in the region of the Chesapeake had died away, the subject of a return was agitated, and in October, 1865, the school reopened on its old grounds. It will be only after a hard struggle that Maryland gives up this Academy, for which it has a very high regard.

There are many arguments in favor of removal, one of them being that Annapolis is considered a rather out-of-the-way place, and somewhat difficult to get to; but this is of less account than the fact that the Naval War College is at Newport, and that at this place the cadets have a much better opportunity for mingling in society and meeting persons from all parts of the world than they possibly could have where they are now quartered. This latter consideration has its importance, as it is a well-understood thing that naval officers are expected to come in contact with dignitaries of all sorts, and when stationed in foreign ports it is of great advantage to them to have social knowledge of distinguished persons of all nationalities. As Newport is highly favored by foreign visitors, it stands to reason that such environment would have its uses in the education of Uncle Sam's sea-going sons.

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## THE DISPUTE WITH ENGLAND.

It is pleasing to be able to record the fact that negotiations are in progress looking to an amicable settlement of our disagreement with England.

A number of eminent English statesmen have expressed themselves as strongly averse to trouble of any sort, and are confident that the little war cloud that at one time seemed so threatening is to be dissipated by the sterling common sense of the more conservative elements.

There is in every country an excitable and pugnacious class that is, to use a slang phrase, "always spoiling for a fight." Peaceful measures are not countenanced by them, and it needs but the shadow of a provocation to set their feathers bristling the wrong way and to stir up in their turbulent bosoms a desire for war.

It has long been the belief that the native good sense and sound reasoning of the people would brush away the danger of an encounter between two of the most powerful nations on earth. A war between the United States and England would be awful, beyond the power of imagination to conceive. With modern armaments and munition, the slaughter would surpass anything in the world's history. To involve two nations in such horrors on any trivial pretext would be the most dreadful injustice and cruelty.

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EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

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### DANGERS OF HARD WORK.

A number of successful business men were engaged in a most animated conversation in one of the rooms of an uptown club, the other day, when the conversation turned on a newspaper paragraph that announced with great impressiveness that a man known all over the civilized world as a brilliant writer and humorist was dying from overwork. Regrets were expressed at the condition of one who was known to many of the members of the club, and some comments were indulged in on the folly of working oneself to death.

A man of sixty-five or thereabouts broke into the conversation with the remark:

"I don't believe that any man ever died of legitimate hard work, and I am willing to back up my statements against any reasonable proof that may be furnished."

This naturally created a sensation, and there were very sharp criticisms on this man's position. But he persisted, and gave his reasons, which were so full of common sense and logic that most of the company were compelled to admit the truth of them.

Men do not die of legitimate work, neither do they, as a rule, die of what they do during business hours. If the man would leave his office and go quietly home to rest or to reasonable recreation, he would not be likely to suffer in health. But he does not do this. He goes out of his office to the club, to the billiard room, to the saloon, the gaming house or other occupations or amusements even less reputable.

Many a man rushes through his business, simply that he may get away to plunge into excesses of various sorts. There may be instances in which a complicated business, handicapped by lack of means to carry it on in a comfortably smooth fashion, may wear on a man's mind during his waking and sleeping hours, and eventually undermine his vitality. But this is not legitimate business. No man has a right to work against such desperate odds. It is very much better to begin on a smaller scale, to adapt one's hopes to the means at hand and remember that vital force is too valuable to be squandered in straining for the almost impossible.

Straightforward commercial transactions, unattended with the enormous risks that many men take, are healthful, and rarely bring bad results. Indeed, all things being equal, it is not business worry that kills, except as a man lifts the burden of business worry on shoulders weakened by excesses, dissipations and unwarranted indulgences.

If men would attribute their ill-health to its just cause and would be honest with themselves and the world, in the majority of cases they would be forced to admit that it is outside matters that cause the drain on their systems and eventually bring them to broken health and shattered intellects. The man who has something to conceal, who has unwarranted business or domestic affairs to look after, matters about which he must be perpetually on the *qui vive* lest some one should detect him, is the man who, nine times out of ten, will break down, and this dissipation is almost invariably charged to overwork in business.

"Poor fellow, he was so devoted to business that he wore himself out at it," is the verdict, and a more unjust and unwarranted one it would be difficult to render.

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### THE WONDERFUL X RAYS.

It is not too soon to rejoice over the beneficent possibilities of the new discovery that allows physicians and scientists to examine all portions of the system and locate hidden or obscure diseases. Already the rays are so fully brought under control that diseases have been located and studied, and an unfailing diagnosis has been made. When we reflect on the exceedingly short time which has elapsed since the announcement of the first experiment, the progress on this line is startling indeed. A number of physicians are taking up the study of electricity and these rays as an auxiliary to their profession. One doctor says that he hopes to be able so to reduce to a certainty the explorations by means of these rays that he can discover disease in every organ and tissue. He declares it not impossible to photograph the blood, and by means of a magnifying glass to study the myriads of forms of life that are exposed thereby. When we shall be able to do this, the next thing in order will be to find special adversaries to cope with these various diseases, then we will practically have the most serious maladies that afflict the human system under subjection, and human suffering will be reduced a thousandfold. All honor and reverence for the minds to whose patient researches we owe so much. At the present moment we cannot comprehend the far-reaching importance of such work. It means the alleviation of suffering, the lightening of the burdens of mankind, and the lifting of the cloud of dread that obscures the future of millions who have heretofore endured hopelessly the pains and weariness of ills with which the medical profession seemed powerless to cope. When we have become able to fight successfully against a great majority of diseases, we shall feel that the sunshine of a better day has dawned upon us. Labor is torture to many people who work through pain and exhaustion and find no relief from any source.

It would be a good thing for the Government to set apart a sum for a more thorough investigation of this subject, to appoint the most skillful experts and furnish them with every available appliance and practically unlimited means for the development of what is unquestionably the most important discovery in the history of science.

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### WHEELS AND WHEELING.

The bicycle is likely to become as necessary a companion to the tourist as the gripsack and waterproof. It goes on the yacht to new fields, and sea-going pleasure-seekers find it a most delightful diversion to put in at some accessible point and take a turn through the surrounding country.

A number of steamships are arranging for a large stock of first-class bicycles to be kept at hand for touring whenever the opportunity offers. Steamers making extensive itineraries find the bicycle a necessity, and they take their passengers a-wheeling as part of the programme.

Legislators are trying to pass laws compelling the railroads to carry bicycles as baggage when accompanied by their owners, and the railroad people are making vigorous protests. One of the iron-clad regulations is that trains having no baggage-cars attached will not take bicycles at any rate.

The wheel assumes more and more importance as time goes on. On almost all of the holidays during the past winter cyclists have been spinning around in the vicinity of New York, and on Washington's Birthday the wheel was a conspicuous feature of the landscape.

It is strongly urged that as this means of locomotion has long passed the stage of mere pleasuring, and has become a convenience and, indeed, a necessity, proper provision should be made for its transportation and the accommodation of those who use it. Railroads will gain nothing by an unaccommodating spirit. The best thing they can do is to recognize the situation, and take the would-be passenger and his wheel rather than rouse a spirit of opposition that has a tendency to keep the wheelmen away from the railroads and induce them to use their wheels, when otherwise they would prefer the cars and the rest and comfort that they bring them.

Already a number of good wheelmen have expressed great disgust at the crankiness of railroads and have ridden the wheel when they would have been very glad to take the train.

It will, of course, take some time to adjust everything, but the railroads must make some concessions, and the sooner they do it, and the more gracefully they acknowledge their new position, the better it will be for all parties concerned.

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### THE MISSING SHIP.

BY GEORGE P. MORRIS.

She left the port in gallant style,
With sails and streamers full and free!
I watch'd her course for many a mile
Far out upon the distant sea!
At dusk she lessen'd to a speck,
And then I could not trace her more.
Sad hearts were beating on her deck,
Sad hearts were beating on the shore.

Two of the outward bound I knew,
One beautiful, the other brave—
The master worthy, and the crew
Born to contend with wind and wave—
For travel some, and some for gain,
And some for health had gone abroad;
Our prayers were with them on the main,
God-speed the ship and all on board!

That vessel never reached the land!
No tidings of her ever came!
Those who beheld her leave the strand,
For years in anguish heard her name!
And even now in vain they try
To breathe it with a tranquil lip,
Or hide the moisture of the eye
While speaking of that missing ship.

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### WAR TALK.

Well-posted statesmen say that the recognition of the belligerency of Cuba means war, and uncompromising war, and that the United States should not hesitate if such a situation confronts us. While Uncle Sam would not do well to put himself out of his way to fight windmills or to espouse the cause of all the distressed nations on the face of the earth, it is proper and becoming to look after those located so near our borders that we are on the footing of next-door neighbors.

The Cubans have had an exceedingly hard time of it, and deserve recognition. It is not good policy to tolerate cruelty and injustice of the grossest sort in order to keep the peace. There is a time and a stage of affairs when endurance not only ceases to be a virtue, but is a positive disgrace. That time is by many persons thought to be rapidly approaching as far as Cuba and the Cubans are concerned.

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### RESTRICTING IMMIGRATION.

A bill presented to Congress provides as follows: All persons over fourteen years of age who cannot read and write the language of their native country are barred from admission, except that an aged parent or grandparent of an admissible immigrant able to read or write may accompany or be sent for by such immigrant.

This provision is timely and appropriate. For years the ports of this country have been open to people of all grades of intelligence, until we have an enormous contingent of ignorance, with which we are unable successfully to struggle. According to one of the Commissioners of Immigration, out of over 217,000 immigrants, over 30,000 could neither read nor write.

This is altogether too large a proportion, and the officials have decided that something must be done about it. As a rule, ignorance is the foster-mother of crime, and the United States is not in a condition to adopt illiterates and try to make good citizens out of them.

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### SPECIAL NOTICE.

If any reader who buys the *Ledger* every week from one of our newsboys has any trouble about getting his *Ledgers* regularly, we will appreciate it very much if he will send us a postal card giving the name of the boy and the post-office address.

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### THE NEW YORK EVENING TELEGRAM ONE CENT.

MR. JAMES GORDON BENNETT has reduced the price of the *Evening Telegram* from two cents to one. The size of the paper, however, and its general excellence remain the same.

The *Telegram* has always been an up-to-date paper, and it is the first of the New York regular two-cent evening papers to take the lead in coming down to the popular price of one cent.

## JOHN C. CALHOUN AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

BY REV. S. PARKES CADMAN.

The vigorous message which has made President Monroe's Administration famous consecrated the entire western hemisphere to free institutions. This procedure was in part due to the eloquence of Henry Clay, who urged upon our government the duty of giving official recognition to the South American republics. Despite the agitation then existing on the free labor question, Arkansas Territory, the States of Illinois, Alabama, Maine and Missouri were added to the possessions of the Federal Government. These commonwealths embraced an area of 205,000 square miles, exclusive of Arkansas. So that the Monroe doctrine never received more complete exposition on this continent than during the years of 1817–'24, the doctrine itself being announced in 1823.

Foremost among the statesmen of this period was John Caldwell Calhoun. He was a man of regal faculty, sterling character and uncommon purity. The integrity and worth of his character have been mentioned in the highest terms by political opponents as well as personal friends. He acted as Secretary of War for seven years during Monroe's presidency, and the previous tenor of his politics shows that he must have sympathized with the statement that "The American continents were not to be considered as subjects for colonization by any European power."

Now without regard to the numberless and contradictory interpretations of this message, many of them fanciful because lacking application to a practical issue, it is easy for us to perceive that it was backed then, in Calhoun's day, by an almost unanimous opinion, and that its main principles are broadly applicable now as then. President Monroe seized an opportune moment to declare the American conviction which had been in existence and had led to great policies long before he enunciated it, and its force lies in the certainty that on any present or future occasion of sufficient importance it will command the support of the entire nation.

Whether John Quincy Adams actually wrote the message or not, he certainly advocated its writing, and it is not unlikely that he influenced its style. Mr. Calhoun, as Secretary of War, was fully aware of and supported its claims. It would have been inconsistent upon his part not to have done so. He began his political career with a protest. In June, 1807, the searching of the *Chesapeake* aroused public feeling in America, and Calhoun drew up a resolution expressive of indignation against Great Britain, and supported it with a speech of such power that he was elected a member of the legislature. Thus the first time his splendid eloquence was heard in his native State of South Carolina, he anticipated the spirit of Monroe's message.

Becoming a member of Congress in 1811, he continued to be an enthusiastic member of the war party which precipitated the conflict against England in 1812, because of her arrogant "Orders in Council."

One quotation from a speech he then delivered shows where he stood on this question. He said:

"To wrongs so daring in their character and so disgraceful in their execution, it is impossible that the people of the United States should remain indifferent. We must now tamely and quietly submit, or we must resist by those means which God has placed within our reach. * * * The period has arrived when, in the opinion of your committee, it is the sacred duty of Congress to call forth the patriotism and the resources of the country."

Truly this was no supine attitude, when the reader remembers that Britain at this time had over a thousand sail of the line, compelled every flag to salute her on the high seas, and endeavored to maintain the right of searching foreign ships besides. So the first public act of Calhoun in Congress was to sound the war trumpet.

There never was a better Secretary of War than Mr. Calhoun. At the time when the Holy Alliance was warned off these continents, he was devoting his tremendous energy and talents to the reforming of the military establishments and the advocacy of better roads for the purpose of defending the country from invasion at any point.

Niles's *Register* said, on March 27th, 1824:

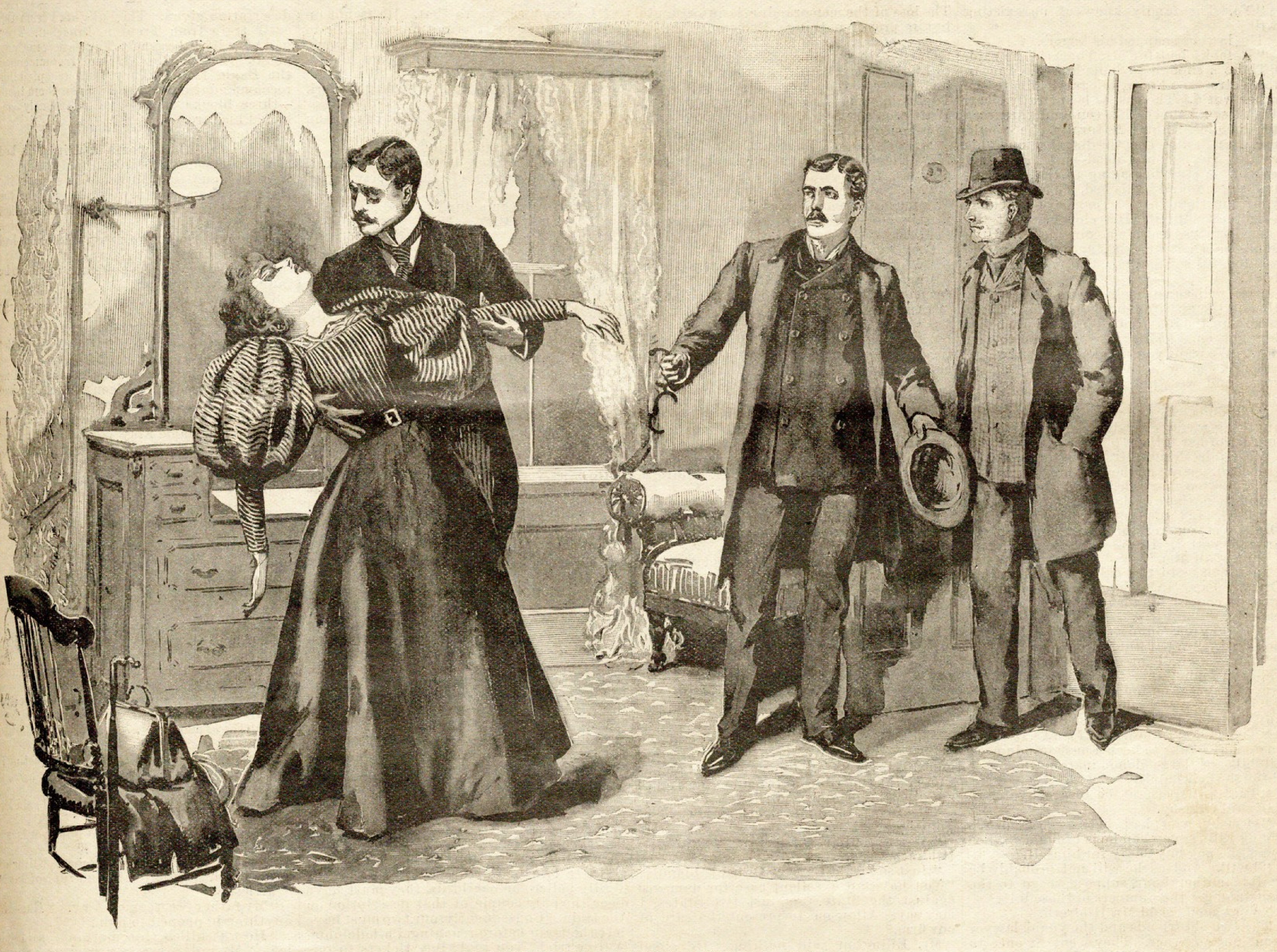
> "The order and harmony, punctuality and responsibility, regularity and promptitude introduced by Mr. Calhoun into every branch of the military service have never been rivalled, and, perhaps, cannot be excelled."

This is high praise, but there is no doubt Mr. Calhoun deserved it.

He left the War Office to become Vice-President, and, because of the nature of his duties, was not so much engaged in making speeches for some years.

His attitude toward the Monroe doctrine will receive further illustration from his treatment of the Oregon boundary question at a later time. Before discussing that I may say that when General Jackson for-

*Continued on page 13.*



SHE STAGGERED AND FELL FAINTING INTO HIS ARMS.

# EMMETT'S GIRL.*

### BY SEWARD W. HOPKINS,

**Author of "In the China Sea," "Two Gentlemen of Hawaii," "Darby, the Bear-Hunter of Alaska," etc.**

["EMMETT'S GIRL" was commenced in No. 8. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. Even *if the News-dealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALLMENTS.

[In order that *new* readers of the *Ledger* may begin with the following installment of this story, and understand it just the same as though they had read it all from the beginning, we here give a synopsis of that portion of it which has already been published: Grace Emmett, a beautiful young typewriter, and Amy Wattleson, the younger daughter of James Wattleson, a rich old widower, love George Ellington, the young bookkeeper of the New York banking firm of Hildreth & Son. Amy's arts prove successful, and when Ellington asks Mr. Wattleson for Amy's hand he is stoutly refused because of his limited means. Amy tells her father that she will marry Ellington with or without his consent, and he threatens to disinherit her. The lovers meet at a ball given by Mrs. Dumphrey in her Madison Avenue mansion, and while they are alone in the conservatory Amy imparts to Ellington a plan she has conceived. Portions of their conversation are overheard by Gideon Welles, a cunning meddler of small income and increasing debts, who expects to marry money in the person of Amy's elder sister, Helen, who detests him. He hears Amy say that her father had that day drawn ninety thousand dollars in cash from Hildreth's bank. Next morning Mrs. Kent, Wattleson's widowed sister and housekeeper, finds her brother murdered in his bed and his secretary rifled, and Amy is missing. Detective Tubbs finds a gold stud on the bed beside the body, and Helen recognizes this as one of a set of three she had given to her brother Tom, who, having been cast off by his father seven years before, had enlisted in the army and is stationed on Governor's Island. Tom is arrested. Almost at the same time, Ellington and Amy, having eloped after the ball, are arrested on their arrival in Philadelphia on the charge of murder and robbery.

Gideon Welles offers his assistance as a detective, and while he is going over the premises he arouses the suspicion of Detective Tubbs, who thinks he is searching for something which he would not like anybody else to find. Old Hildreth and Ellington's father desire to engage the services of Thornton & Ormsby, criminal lawyers, the employers of Grace Emmett. Tom, who was in New York on leave of absence on the night of the murder, tells Colonel Topleigh, his superior officer and the brother of Mrs. Dumphrey, that he would rather die than disclose his whereabouts at the time the murder was committed, because it would compromise the fair name and betray the confidence of a a beautiful woman who loves him. He says he sold the studs given him by his sister to George Ellington.]

## CHAPTER XI.

### A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

WE left Banker Hildreth and old Mr. Ellington in the office of Thornton & Ormsby.

The knob in the door was turned. The odor of Havana cigars floated in before the returning lawyers could be seen.

Mr. Thornton came in first, looking as crabbed and crafty as usual, and Ormsby followed, bland and smiling.

"Mr. Hildreth!" said the elder lawyer. "Didn't expect to see you. Sorry to have kept you waiting. Have you been here long?"

"No, not more than ten or fifteen minutes, though I suppose that seems an age to my friend here. Let me introduce you. Mr. Ellington is an old boyhood friend. Ellington—Thornton, the rascalliest lawyer out of jail."

"Glad to meet you, sir," said the lawyer, blandly.

"We want your assistance, Thornton," said Mr. Hildreth.

"Professionally of course."

"Yes."

"Just step into my room, please."

They followed him in, and he shut the door.

"My friend here is in great distress, Thornton," said Mr. Hildreth. "I will tell you the whole story, so that you will know just how to proceed. Mr. Ellington has a son, George, who is in the employ of our house as bookkeeper. This young man, whose life has been most exemplary, I must say, as long as I have known him, had the misfortune to fall in love."

"Tut, tut," said Mr. Thornton.

"Hear me out. It has proven a dire misfortune. The object of this young man's love was Amy, daughter of James Wattleson—"

"Ha! Old skinflint Wattleson who was killed last night! So your bookkeeper was the chap that ran away with the daughter, eh?"

"You know all about the case, then?"

"No, I do not. I heard merely the main facts. I take it you are here in the interest of the young man. Go on, and tell me all."

"It appears that Wattleson had some business engagement on hand, which called for the payment of ninety thousand dollars. He is one of our depositors, and he drew the money yesterday and kept it in the house over night."

"Bless me, what a fool!"

"I can't for the life of me fathom his purpose," said the banker. "I haven't been doing much lately, only going to the bank an hour or so each day, and didn't see Wattleson—haven't seen him, in fact, in weeks. But to get back to the case in hand. Unfortunately, George Ellington had been refused Amy's hand by Wattleson, and the two young scamps planned an elopement."

"Good. Just what I should have done under the circumstances."

"Yes, yes, you old rascal. But this is more serious than an elopement. They did go, and at the same time their absence was discovered—"

"The ninety thousand dollars were found to be missing, too, eh?"

"Yes, and old Wattleson murdered."

"My boy never did it, Mr. Thornton, he never did," said Mr. Ellington, sobbing. "My poor George! Ah, he had the misfortune to be poor and to love a rich man's daughter. That was his only crime. Ask my old friend Mr. Hildreth. *You* never knew my boy to do anything wrong, sir."

"That is true," said the banker. "So far as I know, as I said before, he has led an exemplary life. He was fond of social life, and of—"

"Hold on," said Mr. Thornton. "Let me get at the crime first, antecedents and habits afterward, if necessary. Now, as a matter of fact, Ellington, as your bookkeeper, would have been likely to know of the withdrawal by Wattleson of the ninety thousand dollars."

"Assuredly. He is our confidential man. He knew all our transactions."

"Now, do you know of any one outside of your employ who would have been likely to know about it?"

"None, so far as I know. Of course, Wattleson may have told any number of people, but I doubt it, for he was not that kind of man."

"No. Quite the contrary. Now, who was the man to whom Wattleson intended paying this money?"

"That we do not know. No one in the family knows that. He was a crossgrained old fellow, always at war with his family, and never took them into his confidence."

"But such a person must exist. To my mind, the individual who was to be paid that money is an important factor in the solution of the mystery."

"There is, I think, a solution without that," said Mr. Hildreth.

"Ah, you have a clue, then? That accounts for your faith in young Ellington."

"Not entirely. I have sufficiently explained that. And if any further cause for my interest was needed, it could be found in the lifelong friendship that has existed between his father and me. I have promised him to stand by his boy, and I will."

"What was the clue you spoke about?" asked Mr. Thornton.

"Wattleson had a son," said the banker, "a ne'er do-well."

"That is news," said Thornton. "What of him?"

"Owing to his rascalities he was sent away from home some years ago, and disinherited. At least, that threat was made. This son enlisted in the army, and has been in the artillery on Governor's Island. It seems that Helen, Wattleson's elder daughter, sympathized with her brother, and has remained friends with him right along."

"Ah!"

"And four years ago she gave him a set of gold studs as a Christmas present."

"Go on." Mr. Thornton was getting interested.

"Now, the detective on the case found one of those very studs in the bed where the murdered man lay."

"Prime evidence, that—circumstantial, but good."

"Very well. Thomas Wattleson is under arrest."

"Was there any way, do you think, that *he* could have learned of the money?"

"Not that I know of."

"But the stud. The stud 's the thing. He may have known that his father kept some money by him at all times. Or, he may have been after the will. Was there a will found?"

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“No. The family know of no existing will.”

The lawyer snapped his fingers.

“It looks bad for Mr. Thomas,” he said. “There’s enough to hang him—no, I mean to electro—you know, telegraph him to the other world. The case is beautifully clear. Wattleson bounces his son, and threatens to disinherit him. Naturally, he would make a will directing the distribution of his estate. He is found dead—murdered—and *no will*. A stud belonging to the disinherited son is found in his bed. What more do you want than that? *Your* boy—my client—isn’t even in it. His elopement at the same time was merely a coincidence. He’s gone—he’s got his girl, and that’s all he wanted. When he gets ready, he’ll come back.”

“He will come back before he’s ready. He and the girl are coming back now. They were arrested in Philadelphia, and are being brought on. *That’s* why we came to you now. We want you to take hold of the case at once. There’s the inquest and all to come, and we want the boy to have fair play.”

“I’ll do it. By the way, has any one said anything about charging the girl with the murder of her father?”

Mr. Hildreth and Mr. Ellington sat as if stupefied, gazing at the lawyer.

“It is too horrible,” said the banker. “And then, there is the stud.”

“True. Let me get Ormsby into this. Ormsby is younger than I am, and can get around better. He is equally good, too. I’ll just call him.”

In response to the call of Mr. Thornton, Ormsby came in. Thornton repeated the story in concise language. Ormsby listened eagerly.

“Has any one found a trace of the money?” he asked. “What kind of money was it?”

“Bank-notes, I presume. No trace has yet been found, unless—no, impossible. No trace has yet been found.”

“Had Mr. Wattleson, the murdered man, any record of the numbers on these notes?”

“That I don’t know, but *I have*. It is the custom of banks to keep a memorandum on all bills of large denomination that pass through their hands.”

“That will, perhaps, be of great value to us,” said Ormsby.

“Ormsby, you had better go and see young Ellington when he is brought in. See what the boy has to say for himself.”

“I will. And as he will not probably be in for another hour, suppose we go to the bank and get the numbers of those bills.”

“Very good,” said Mr. Hildreth.

The two old friends and the young lawyer went out together. They went at once to the banking-house of Hildreth & Son. Entering here, they stepped into the private office of Mr. Hildreth, who rang a bell. A messenger answered it.

“Request my son to come here,” said the banker.

Arthur soon appeared.

“Arthur,” said Mr. Hildreth, “I want the memorandum of the large bills we paid out yesterday.”

“Yes, sir, I will get it at once.”

The three men waited impatiently while he was gone.

Outside, in the counting-room, there was a scene of hurry and excitement. Arthur Hildreth had gone to a certain desk and began to search among some papers upon it. The memorandum he sought was not there.

“Mr. Clarke!” he called. The cashier came to him.

“I want the memorandum of the bills of large denominations handled by us yesterday.”

“Why, it ought to be here on Ellington’s desk. If it is not, Ellington must have taken it when he left yesterday afternoon.”

They repeated the search together, this time more carefully. No use. The paper was gone.

“I hate to go in and tell them,” said Arthur. “Poor old man, he fully believes his son is innocent. Can’t you recall the numbers?”

The cashier shook his head.

“I could not, neither could the paying-teller,” he said. “We handled several lots of the large notes yesterday. The figures were all on one paper. The numbers, I mean.”

With a sigh, Arthur returned to the office.

“I am sorry to say, father,” he said, “that the memorandum cannot be found.”

“Stolen?” asked Lawyer Ormsby.

“I do not say that. All I know is that it is gone.”

“No, no!” said Mr. Hildreth. “There must be some mistake, Arthur. The paper has been mislaid. Have a complete search made for it.”

“That has been done, sir.”

“Where ought this memorandum to have been?” asked Ormsby.

Hildreth hesitated and looked at his father.

“Speak!” said the old man.

“On—on Ellington’s desk, sir.”

Mr. Ellington’s head dropped into his hands.

“My poor boy! My poor boy!” he murmured.

Mr. Hildreth sat looking at the distressed father in an irresolute manner.

Ormsby broke the silence.

“Come,” he said, “let us go and see Ellington.”

“I will go with you,” said Mr. Hildreth. “I’ll not give in yet. My faith in George is too strong to be swept away like this. We’ll fight it out, Ellington. We’ll fight it out. The loss of the memorandum is unfortunate, but it proves nothing. Remember that it *proves nothing*. Come!”

Outside they took a cab, and were driven to Ludlow Street Jail. As they were going up the steps they were joined by Colonel Topleigh, who had just come from Tom Wattleson’s cell in Captain Plunkett’s station-house.

“Come to see Ellington, Colonel?” asked Mr. Hildreth, after introducing his companions.

“No,” said the Colonel. “Amy.”

It must be remembered that the Colonel was in possession of facts concerning the stud that the others lacked.

They went in together.

“When do you expect the prisoners George Ellington and Amy Wattleson?” asked Ormsby of the warden, whom he well knew.

“Any minute now. Officers Mullet and Graw were sent. Both good men.”

“Pugilists, I hope,” said Ormsby, sarcastically, “for I understand the two unfortunates are very desperate characters.”

“Pshaw!” replied the warden. “You know as well as I do that we have nothing to do with that here. The men are sent from headquarters. Two are always sent. It would be a fine recommendation for the police if the prisoners should escape.”

“True. Duty is duty,” said Mr. Hildreth, “albeit sometimes painful.”

“Here they come now,” said the warden.

Two officers in civilian dress came in, bringing the two prisoners arrested in Philadelphia.

“Are those fellows Mullet and Graw?” roared the Colonel.

“Yes,” replied the warden, wonderingly. The behavior of his visitors was beginning to be strange. “What’s wrong?”

“Wrong!” blurted Colonel Topleigh. “That is not Amy Wattleson.”

“No, nor my son George,” said Mr. Ellington.

“Heavens!” said Mr. Hildreth. “They have arrested the wrong couple. Who are you, sir, please?”

“My name is George Endicott,” said the prisoner, angrily, “of Trenton, New Jersey, and this is my wife. I demand an explanation of this horrible outrage on the rights and liberties of American citizens!”

“By Jove! I should say so,” said Colonel Topleigh.

“A—a—peculiar misfortune,” said Mr. Hildreth.

“Just so,” said Lawyer Ormsby, blandly. “You have an excellent case for damages against the State. Against two States, I may say. Allow me to present the card of our firm.”

Mr. Ellington said nothing. He stood staring blankly at the wronged couple. This sudden twist and diversion were too much for his already tottering intellect. But through his brain flashed the words:

“Safe yet! Safe yet! Thank God!”

## CHAPTER XII.

### RUN DOWN.

There was a scene at Police Headquarters. Mr. Endicott and his wife had been released, and Officers Mullet and Graw had reported to their chief. Mullet and Graw were mildly rebuked for their part in the mistake—discipline required that much—but the anathemas of an enraged police department were hurled at the police of Philadelphia.

“Well,” said the Chief, “we have made a holy show of ourselves. Now we must take those runaways or die in the attempt. You two officers *must* find them and land them in Ludlow Street Jail before to-morrow morning.”

There was a pause. Mullet and Graw were awkwardly waiting.

“Any instructions, sir?” asked Graw.

“None—only find George Ellington and Amy Wattleson.”

Mullet and Graw looked at each other in silence a moment.

“Graw, come on,” said Mullet, at last.

Graw followed him out.

“What are you going to do?” asked Graw. “I’m stumped.”

“Pshaw! You’re green. I’ll find them two chickens.”

“How?”

“Come along and see.”

Mullet led the way to Broadway, where they boarded a cable car going toward the battery.

“Liberty Street?” asked Graw, as he paid the fare.

“Yep,” said Mullet.

At Liberty Street they jumped off—passengers on the cable cars are obliged to jump off if they get off at all—and started down toward the ferry.

“Going to Philadelphia?” asked Graw.

“No. Going to find the conductor of the train that left at six A. M.”

“Oh!”

Having reached the ferry-house, they made themselves known.

“What I want to learn,” said Mullet, “is the name of the conductor who took out the train leaving for Philadelphia at six A. M.”

“I can’t tell you that,” said the agent then in charge. “I was not here then. See the people at the office.”

So back to the office of the company they went.

Arriving here, they told their errand.

“Train 563,” said the clerk who waited on them. “The conductor of that train this morning was William Read.”

“Where can I find William Read now?” asked Mullet.

“I cannot say as to that. He is not on duty. Therefore it is not unreasonable to suppose that you will find him at his home. Wait a moment and I will give you his address.”

After looking this up in a book, the clerk said:

“Read lives at Number 245 Henderson Street, Jersey City.”

“Thank you,” said Mullet.

They walked back toward West Street. Graw started to cross to the Liberty Street ferry.

“Where are you going?” asked Mullet.

“To Jersey City. Ain’t you?” replied Graw.

“Yes, but not on that ferry. That lands you in the most God-forsaken spot in all Jersey, and as far from where we want to go as we are now, with a confounded row-boat ferry to cross to get over to Jersey City proper.”

Graw joined Mullet, and they walked north a block, and crossed Cortlandt Street ferry, landing in Jersey City at the foot of Montgomery Street.

“How far is Henderson Street?” asked Graw.

“Not far. Only a few blocks.”

Fortunately they found conductor William Read at home.

He was very much surprised to receive two visitors so near supper-time, and was more surprised when the visitors showed the badges of the New York Police.

“Well, well, what can I do for you, gentlemen?” he asked.

“You took out train 563 this morning?” said Mullet.

“Yes—that’s so,” said Conductor Read. “Anything wrong about it?”

“No, not with the train. You took two passengers from New York for Philadelphia. A young man, good-looking, well-dressed, and a pretty girl, about nineteen years old. A regular peaches-and-cream sort of girl.”

“Eloped?”

“Worse.”

“My, my! What is it?”

“I’ll tell you all about it,” said Mullet. “Them two is wanted for murder. We wired the Philadelphia police to nab them when they got off your train.”

“Ha! I saw that arrest!”

“Yes, but the people arrested were not the two we wanted. They answered the description, though. Now it is proven that they belong in Trenton. It looks to me as it, these two being the ones taken by the Philly police for *our* birds, they must have been the only couple of that description on the train. Consequently, our two must have left the train before reaching Philadelphia. A foxy trick, you see! Buy tickets to one place, get off at another. Throw detectives off the track. A good trick, if it succeeds, but a bad one if it fails, for it adds to the evidence of guilt.”

“I should say so,” said Conductor Read. “Now I come to think of it, that couple *did* get off somewhere on the line. Wait a minute. I see so many getting on and off it’s hard to remember. But I know I called to mind the fact that they hadn’t ridden out their ticket. Let me see. At Newark, Jones, the baggage-man, put a little girl aboard in my charge. Scarcely anybody left the train there. At Elizabethport some workingmen got on for Elizabeth, and I remember now, I saw the two you want after we passed Elizabeth, for there I took up their tickets and gave them through slips. At Plainfield, Billy the Goat that sells pop-corn and candy on the train, got his foot hurt, and the girl seemed anxious about him. Ah, I have it! Trenton Junction! They left the train at Trenton Junction!”

“Sure of it?” asked Mullet.

“As sure as I am that I am in this house.”

“You distinctly recollect *seeing* them leave the train? We don’t want to go to Trenton on a wild-goose chase.”

“Oh, I’m cock sure. You won’t make any mistake if you go to Trenton.”

Messrs. Mullet and Graw thanked Conductor Read, and started back toward the river.

“Back to Liberty Street?” queried Graw.

“No. Save time by taking Pennsylvania.”

The station of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Jersey City is at the foot of Montgomery Street. Reaching this, Detective Mullet bought two tickets for Trenton. A train was about to start, and the officers scurried through the gate and climbed on board.

Arriving at Trenton, they went to the P. & R. Railroad Station, and Mullet at once took the baggage-master into his confidence. He had no recollection of the couple sought. But Mr. Mullet was indefatigable. He plied first one employee and then another with questions. Railroad employees are famous for their know-nothingism. The men at Trenton were no exception to the rule. Mr. Mullet gained no information from them.

He next turned his attention to the cab-drivers.

Number 15 had had no passengers all day and was in a swearing mood over his ill-luck. Number 153 was too drunk to know whether he had seen the runaways or not. Number 506 flipped his fingers in Mullet’s face, and asked:

“How much is it worth to tell?”

Mullet soon explained to him that he must tell all he knew, or spend the night in the Trenton lockup. Then No. 506 remembered he had not carried the passengers alluded to.

So Mullet kept on. His patience seemed everlasting.

At last!

No. 321 *did* have two fares answering the description given. They alighted from the early train from Trenton Junction. They had very little baggage. They knew nothing about Trenton. No. 321 had recommended the Eagle Hotel. They had accepted his recommendation. He had driven them there—three blocks away—and religiously collected his fare.

Mullet thanked No. 321.

“Ain’t all that worth a drink?” asked the accommodating cabby.

At a sign from Mullet, Graw took the thirsty cabman in tow, and paid for the slaking of his thirst, while Mullet, now hot on the scent, hurried on to the Eagle Hotel.

He looked at the register. After he had examined it carefully a few minutes, he was fairly appalled at the evidence of nerve he found there displayed.

The first entry of the day was George Ellington of New York.

The next, Amy Wattleson of New York.

In reply to a question to the clerk, Mullet learned that these two, after engaging a room, and asking a few questions relating to ministers, marriage license, etc., had had breakfast and gone out together.

When they returned, a red line was drawn through the name Amy Wattleson, and the words “and wife” added to the entry of Ellington.

The first thought that came into Mullet’s head was this:

“Whatever *she* knows will never be told. A wife cannot be made to testify against her husband.”

“Are Mr. Ellington and his wife in?”

“They are.”

Mr. Mullet was shown to their room. He knocked loudly on the door.

“Come in,” was the answer.

Mr. Mullet accepted the invitation.

George Ellington sat near the window, smoking a cigar. Amy sat near him.

“What can I do for you?” asked Ellington.

“Come with me,” said the detective, sternly. “I place you under arrest.”

“Oh!” gasped Amy. “Have they followed us?”

“But why do you speak of arresting?” asked Ellington. “Eloping, at our ages, is not a crime.”

“But robbery is, and murder is,” said Mr. Mullet.

“Murder! Robbery! What words are these? What do you mean?”

“I mean that I arrest George Ellington and Amy, his wife, for the murder of James Wattleson.”

“My father?” screamed Amy. “Has—has anything happened to him?”

“He was killed this morning,” said Mullet. “My orders are to arrest you two and take you back to New York.”

Amy stood staring wildly at Mr. Mullet. With a cry of “George! George!” she staggered, waved to and fro, and then fell fainting into his arms.

Mr. Graw came in just then, and Ellington, seemingly smitten dumb by the suddenness of the attack, suffered himself to be handcuffed.

Restoratives were applied, Amy revived, and in less than two hours thereafter, the couple who had spent a happy day—the first and last of their wedded life—were clapped into Ludlow Street Jail to await the result of the inquest and examination the following morning.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### CONVICTED.

On the following day, Tom Wattleson, George Ellington and Amy were brought up for a preliminary examination.

Wattleson, being sworn first, told the story of the studs, and the sale of them to George Ellington. As this was unhesitatingly corroborated by Ellington himself, Wattleson was allowed to go. Amy, for some reason or other, was not considered as a party to the crime, the weight of the police being thrown solely against poor Ellington.

The most wretched thing for George was that while he recollected, and admitted, having the studs in his possession, having purchased them from Wattleson, he could not tell what had subsequently become of them. He claimed never to have worn them, because he had promised Wattleson never to allow Helen to know of the transaction. Just what he did with them, he did not know. One day, in a spirit of friendliness, he had thought of returning them to Wattleson, and had looked for them, but in vain. He had an indistinct idea that he had put them in a drawer, but whether at his home or at the bank, he did not know.

This was, of course, condemnatory—in the eyes of the police. He was remanded and held for trial.

Now the path of poor Ellington was, indeed, strewn with thorns. He was deserted by all his friends but two. His poor old doting father, still convinced of Ellington’s innocence, clung to him, in a pitiful hope that the trial would free him; and Gideon Welles, for some reason known only to himself, chose to turn his back on his censors and profess a belief in Ellington’s innocence.

There was another—a pale-faced, beautiful girl, who sobbed out her love and confidence in her mother’s ear, but who, before the world, compelled herself to wear the mask of indifference. This was Grace Emmett.

How different was Amy! It had been one thing to run away with a man who was well liked in society. It was another to be tied to a murderer who was sure of conviction, Her selfish soul grew restive under the taint of crime, and she gradually became a believer in her husband's guilt. Instead of remaining loyal and doing her utmost to encourage him with loving words, she did not go near him; and when he had sent her a piteous letter of appeal, she had returned a verbal message by Lawyer Ormsby that she did not wish any further communication until he stood before the world cleared of every charge. This was Ellington's bitterest cup, and he was a changed man from that day.

To his old father only was he the same. To the world he was cold and stony in his indifference and despairing hatred.

At last came the day of the trial.

The first witness sworn was Mrs. Kent. She had very little to say that added in any way to the solution of the case. She had been aroused about six o'clock by a servant, Jane Gidley, who was frightened at the absence of Amy and the presence of a ladder sticking above the kitchen roof. Mrs. Kent had at once risen and made an investigation. She visited Amy's room, and found the bed undisturbed, the room vacant. She then went into her brother's room, and found him lying on his back, with the blood oozing from a wound in his left breast. She woke Helen, the other servants were aroused, and an officer called in.

This was all the prosecution desired to know from her.

The next witness was the servant, Jane Gidley, who merely corroborated what Mrs. Kent had said.

It was now Helen's turn, and she did little but repeat what had already been heard.

It was now the turn of Mr. Tubbs, the detective.

Mr. Tubbs, being sworn, went on to tell how he had found things when he came to the house; how he carefully examined the premises, and how he found the painters' ladder in position, leaning against the eaves of the kitchen; and how he had, in examining the murdered man's room, discovered a peculiarly designed gold stud which had evidently fallen from some person bending over the bed, and had rolled down into the hollow formed by the weight of Mr. Wattleson's body. Further, how, when he had shown this stud to Miss Helen Wattleson, she had screamed and fainted. And how, when she had recovered, he had asked her some questions, and she reluctantly admitted that the stud belonged to her brother Thomas, a soldier on Governor's Island. And when said Thomas appeared upon the scene, in answer to a telegram from Mrs. Kent, Mr. Tubbs had straightway placed him under arrest—a mistake, as was subsequently proven, quite justifiable, and for which Mr. Wattleson could not hold any animosity toward him, the detective.

This was, in substance, Mr. Tubbs's direct testimony.

On cross-examination, by Lawyer Ormsby, he made the following statement:

"After making the arrest, I took Wattleson to the lockup and returned to the house. I found a suspicious-acting person on the premises, who was going over the ground I had covered, as if he was looking for something. He went inside the bath-room, Amy's room and the room occupied by Mr. Wattleson's body. Then he climbed out of the window and went down the ladder."

"You were certain he was looking for something?"

"I was certain he acted as if he was."

"Is that person in court?"

"Not in this room. I understand he is here as a witness."

"His name?"

"Gideon Welles."

Mr. Welles was called. He was plainly in a great rage.

In response to the questions of the District Attorney, who tried to use Mr. Welles against Ellington, the witness could not be said to improve the situation. He entered into a lengthy dissertation on the defects of the modern detective system, and the prosecution was glad to turn him over to Mr. Ormsby.

On cross-examination, in reply to Ormsby's question if he knew the money was in Mr. Wattleson's house, Mr. Welles made the astounding statement that he did. He went on to tell *how* he knew it—having overheard part of the conversation—plot—between Ellington and Amy in Mrs. Dumphrey's conservatory. Mr. Ormsby's attempt had been to throw suspicion on Gideon, but the testimony clearly hurt the prisoner.

Tom Wattleson was now called.

"All I know about this," he said, "is what I've been told. It is true that between my father and myself an unfriendly feeling has existed, but I never cherished a thought of hatred toward him. In the main, my troubles were my own fault. I was not near the house of my father on the morning of the murder. And there was absolutely no way in which I could learn of the presence there of ninety thousand dollars."

When this witness had been turned over to Ormsby, the lawyer said:

"In the case of young Wattleson, the cash would not be the motive for—"

"Wattleson is not on trial," said the Judge. "He is not charged with any crime."

In a subtle way Ormsby got around his point, and showed that Wattleson would not tell *where* he was on the fatal morning. Part of this testimony, however, was stricken out on motion of the prosecution.

Ellington himself was sworn.

His testimony, in substance, amounted to this;

"A few nights before the murder," he said, "I went to Mr. Wattleson and asked his consent to the marriage of his daughter Amy and myself. He refused. The following night I met Amy at the house of Mrs. Dumphrey, and there we planned an elopement. She told me it would be impossible to get out through the lower part of the house, but quite easy for her to slip through a window in the hall over the kitchen roof. She told me that some painters had left a ladder in the yard, and I was to place it against the kitchen and help her down.

"I went through an alley in the side block between the mansion of Mr. Dives and his stable, and easily gained the Wattleson yard. The programme we had laid down at Mrs. Dumphrey's was carried out. We hurried to the ferry at Liberty Street, took the six A. M. train, buying tickets to Philadelphia, but getting off at Trenton Junction, to throw any followers off the scent. From there we went to Trenton. At Trenton we were married, and spent a happy day—the last I shall ever spend, no matter what the verdict may be to-day—and at nightfall we were arrested and brought back to New York. As for the stud that was found in Mr. Wattleson's bed, it is true that it once belonged to me. I purchased the set from Thomas Wattleson and put them somewhere—I cannot recall where. I never could find nor trace them. I never wore them for fear that Helen would see them. I bought them merely to help Wattleson out of a tight place. I did not murder Mr. Wattleson, nor did I enter his house that morning."

Mr. Hildreth was the next witness. He was, reluctantly, a strong witness for the prosecution. Reluctantly, because he felt a strong repugnance to playing a part in bringing about the downfall of his old friend's son. But, alas! even his faith in his bookkeeper had gone. His testimony showed that Ellington was in a position to know that Mr. Wattleson drew the money from the bank, and he went on to tell how the important memorandum of the numbers of the bank-notes was found to be missing just when they were needed most. He further said that neither he nor anybody else, so far as he knew, could shed any light on the question as to who the person was to whom Mr. Wattleson was to pay that money.

This closed the taking of testimony.

The District-Attorney spoke about two hours, bitterly arraigning Ellington, and clearly affecting the jury.

Then Ormsby rose for the defense. He dwelt upon the unsubstantial evidence that had been used against his client; the fact that doubt had been thrown—suspicion, if you please—on Wattleson and Gideon Welles, either of whom might have committed the crime.

After this the Judge's charge, and the jury retired.

In one hour they returned, and the verdict was read.

George Ellington was convicted of murder in the first degree—the punishment for which is death.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 12.]

◆

## GONE BEFORE.

BY A. H. S.

You that have gone before me
To the dark unknown,
One by one who have left me
To walk alone,

Friends of my youth and manhood
Vanished away,
Like a drift of crimson sunset
At close of day!

We held sweet converse together
Of soul with soul,
Probing the life of nature
From pole to pole.

Spelling again the story
Of days of old,
Dreaming of all the wonder
The years yet hold.

Half of my own self were you,
Half of my life.
Sharing its thought and action,
Its peace and strife.

Now, tho' I call, none answers;
Vain is my prayer,
Vainly my question falleth
On voiceless air.

Nay, but the years pass swiftly,
And I, too, pass
Out of the world of sunshine
Like autumn grass.

On to the world beyond us,
The dark unknown,
To join the friends of my manhood,
No more alone.

There, where their dreams are ended,
And life's long quest,
Jesus, O Lord, have mercy,
Grant them Thy rest!

◆

## INCREASE IN ROLLING STOCK.

The condition of railroad business in the United States is shown by the reports of the builders of railroad stock. There are thirteen locomotive manufacturing companies in the United States, and these have turned out more locomotives within the past year than in any year previous. In 1894 they built 695 locomotives, and in 1895, 1,109. In 1894 the freight cars constructed were 17,029 against 31,803 in 1895.

## JOHN C. CALHOUN AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

*Continued from page* 10.

cibly took possession of the Spanish forts of St. Mark's and Pensacola, Calhoun deemed his high-handed procedure as a breach of international law, and did not hesitate to say so. This was afterward discovered by "Old Hickory," who grew furiously enraged concerning his criticism, and effectually blighted Calhoun's hopes of the Presidency. So that far from being a "jingo," he probably lost the highest honor the Nation has in its gift because of his statesmanlike respect for the rights of other nations.

He advocated the annexation of Texas, because he believed that it would preserve the balance of power between slave-holding and free States. This policy was not so much based upon any view he had of the Monroe doctrine as it was upon his deep conviction that such a balance was necessary to preserve the Union. When President Tyler invited Mr. Calhoun to become the head of his Cabinet, he did so because of the special demand for a statesman who could handle the disputed questions of foreign policy concerning Texas and the Oregon boundary.

They left Texas annexed, and the Oregon question unsettled. President Polk made a sharp cut through their policy of "wise and masterly inactivity," and declared the title of the United States to the Territory of Oregon clear and unquestioned. The whole country blazed with wild excitement, such as we recently witnessed concerning the Venezuelan boundary.

"Fifty-four forty or fight," was the plain language of the radicals. A set of resolutions were introduced in the United States Senate by Senator Hannegan which boldly denied even the power of the Government to settle the controversy by any compromise, or to concede one foot of the territory to England. Calhoun met these with counter-resolutions, and deprecated war over a boundary dispute, stating that the forty-ninth degree, as a compromise boundary, did not "abandon the honor, the character or the best interests of the American people."

Such, then, is the connection of South Carolina's great son with the Monroe doctrine. He enunciated its spirit long before Monroe explicitly avowed its principles. He was in the Cabinet as Secretary of War at the time of its promulgation. He had fearlessly applied it in anticipation during the struggle of 1812-1816. In his intercourse with foreign nations as an acknowledged diplomat and high official of this Government, he showed for them and their rights the punctilious respect which he exacted from them toward us. He defied the sea-mistress of the world in the height of her sway and the days of our weakness. But thirty years later, when this nation was vastly increased in means and forces, he lifted his powerful voice for peace in a dispute which affected, not the boundary of a sister Republic, but our own northern possessions.

What would have been his attitude toward the Venezuelan question none can determine. He did his own thinking, and was fearlessly independent in saying what he had thought. But his line of action in the historical events set before the reader induces me to speculate that he would have deemed the whole case a most proper one for arbitration. The evident desire for this upon the part of intelligent Englishmen, the warm expressions of sympathy and even admiration from official circles in Queen Victoria's cabinet, and our own unswerving attitude for a friendly settlement will cause the present trouble to cease, not upon the scene of an awful and bloody conflict, but in the calm, judicial atmosphere of a Court of Commission.

## PLEASURES OF THE GARDEN.

It may be that we can find in tilling the soil pleasures and profit not only for our mental and physical but for our spiritual natures. It is not improbable that in the Divine plan the fact of our first parents living in very close communion with nature was designed to teach us some comprehensive and salutary lessons. Certainly there can be no occupation that is productive of more genuine satisfaction than tilling the soil and watching day by day the sprout, the leaf, the bud, the flower, and after a time the ripe fruit which rewards us for all of our labor and makes our hearts glad.

Aside from the profit of the farm, the enjoyment of the business cannot but be evident to any one who takes the right view of the subject. Not only the plants but the young animals appeal to our sense of protection, and demand gentle and careful treatment if they would be profitable and in any degree satisfactory.

Ill-kept stock, a neglected farm and thin and scattering crops are evidences of a serious lack in the mental capacity of the farmer. Setting aside the fact that there are many people who cannot do as they would like, and who necessarily must conduct their farms on a scale too economical to be profitable, it is unquestionably true that comprehensive, clear-headed, energetic people will make their dispositions and temperaments apparent in all of their work. Limited means may be evident, but there will be an air of tidiness and thrift about some portion of the place, and one can tell at a glance the intent and purpose there, even though the financial ability may be almost or altogether lacking.

In the course of a conversation at a dinner-table the other day, it was remarked that there were, all over New England, farms to be had for the asking. The question naturally arose, why this should be.

There was and could be but one answer, and that was, the lack of facilities for marketing produce. There is not probably in the whole length and breadth of New England a place that might not be made profitable, if the proprietor of it took the right course with it.

Shipping facilities are not always available but there are many products that can be so arranged that even distance would be no bar to good results. Very few people, especially ordinary farmers, seem to be aware that there are crops that will always find a market, and that a few miles more or less amounts to nothing as an impediment.

One old farmer whose place was remote from railroads, and accessible only by a not very good road, turned his attention to raising pennyroyal and extracting the oil; another, with any amount of what his neighbors called waste land, grew rich by growing wintergreen and preparing essence and oil. Mints of all kinds are marketable at good prices, and essential oils never fail to find buyers, provided they are of approximately good grade. They may not pay as well as enormous fields of wheat, but the man has the place and no market, why, therefore, should he not turn to account the things within his reach?

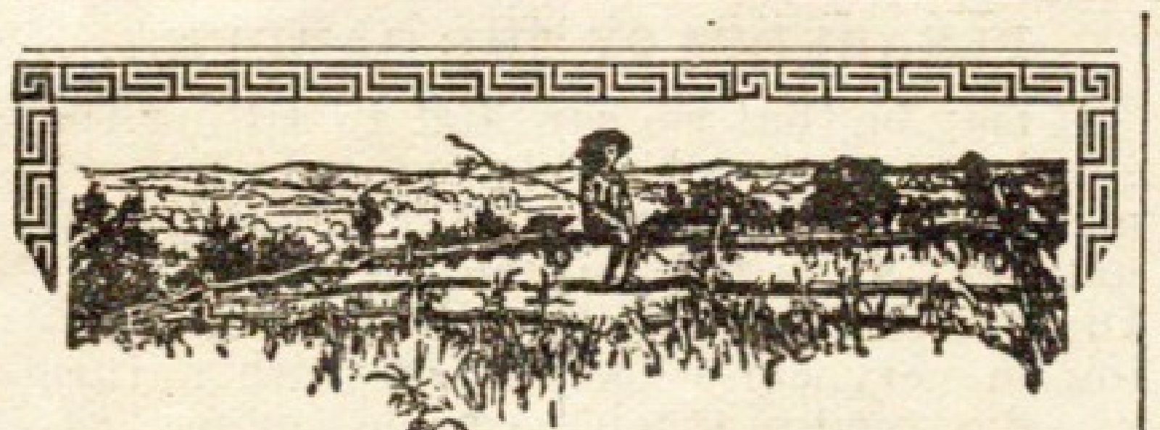
A young woman has saved money enough to take herself through college by growing the rose-geranium and making extracts that can be rectified by scientific processes, and she always finds a good market. It is not too much to say that any man, woman or child, with a proper amount of energy, can wrest a living from even the most barren New England farm, provided there is determination and a little knowledge to support the endeavor. It may be in the gathering of balsam fir for pillows, or the gathering of nuts, whatever is undertaken in the right spirit is bound to prove remunerative, at least to the extent of providing a living.

**Bottlebinding.**

You can't judge of the quality of a book by the binding, nor tell the contents by the title. You look for the name of the author before you buy the book. The name of Robert Louis Stevenson (for instance) on the back guarantees the inside of the book, whatever the outside may be.

There's a parallel between books and bottles. The binding, or wrapper, of a bottle is no guide to the quality of the medicine the bottle contains. The title on the bottle is no warrant for confidence in the contents. It all depends on the author's name. Never mind who made the bottle. Who made the medicine? That's the question.

Think of this when buying Sarsaparilla. It isn't the binding of the bottle or the name of the medicine that you're to go by. That's only printer's ink and paper! The question is, who made the medicine? What's the author's name? When you see Ayer's name on a Sarsaparilla bottle, that's enough. The name Ayer guarantees the best, and has done so for 50 years.



## CHILDREN ALL OVER THE WORLD.

### My Cousin.

My little cousin is a queer little fellow. He is very quiet, and he does not talk much. He is pale and straight, and has very black hair and real black eyes, not brown, and a red mouth and white teeth. He has been sent home to go to school and get an education. His father is a missionary amongst the people in India, and his mother is a native lady, who was converted to Christianity when she was a girl. I thought him the best boy I ever knew until something happened, which I will tell you.

At Christmas I had lots of nice things given to me. A box of dominoes, a box of colors, animals in a menagerie and a great number of soldiers, so that regiments and companies could be made up, with proper officers, and a fort, a river, flags, bridges and everything to play war with, even cannon and little balls to fire from them. My cousin was very nice to play with, and we enjoyed ourselves, until strange things began to happen. They began to happen to the dominoes first. One morning three were gone, the next two, and so on. I hunted for them, but found none; and my cousin looked, too.

"Gone," he said, at last. "In India, when things go like that, we know the servants have taken them."

"But *I* know that Sarah and Jane would never touch my toys, Seba," I said.

"Well," said Seba, "and who can it be, then?"

There was no guessing, so we put the dominoes away; we could not play with so many missing. And we had gotten up some splendid games with the animals, when they began to go also—the elephant and the rhinoceros, the buffalo and the tiger, one after the other, until I got frightened.

We put the animals in their boxes and began to play at war. That was the best of all, and we were having the grandest battles, when our generals and our colonels began to disappear, as if they were alive and could walk away, and our soldiers galloped after them. One day my mother called me to her, and said:

"Tom, I must talk to you about your toys. I have been putting your room to rights, and I find there are scarcely any of them left. They were all handsome and costly, and you should have taken care of them. What does it mean?"

When I told her that I did not know, and how sorry and puzzled I felt, for certainly some went every day, she cried out:

"I think I know where they go, Tom, and I want you to promise me to say nothing about our talk, but to keep yourself dressed to-night, until I come to your room. I've an idea we shall catch the thief and get your toys back. We will hide in the play-room pantry and watch; but whatever happens, don't say a word until I tell you."

I promised, but what was to come I could not think; and when mamma and I stood inside the play-room pantry that night, listening to a soft foot coming along the hall, and saw the door open softly, inch by inch, I expected to see a brownie or a fairy come in, and began to feel chills up my back. But what came in was only Cousin Seba, in his pajammas.

The moon was shining in at the window, and it was dreadful to see him creep across the room and go to the table where what was left of our army stood, and gather up a dozen tents and some pontoon-bridges and a whole company of soldiers. After this he took some ninepins under his arm and glided out of the room.

I think I should have called out, but mamma put her hand over my mouth, and whispered:

"Take off your shoes."

She had taken off her own slippers, I saw, and I hurried to do as she said, and followed her. Seba was going up the garret stairs, and we followed him. The garret had a great skylight in it, and we could see him plainly. When he came from India he had brought a large chest, lined with wood that smelled very sweetly. This had been emptied and stored in the garret. Straight to this he went, lifted the lid, put into the chest all that he had brought and closed it again. Again mamma put her hand over my mouth, and we watched my cousin as he glided away and descended the stairs. Then we followed him once more. He went straight to his own room and got into bed, and mamma locked his door, and drew me back to the play-room by my wrist.

"The mystery is solved," she said.

"Oh, I cannot believe it!" said I. "Cousin Seba a thief! A minister's son, too!"

"Things are by no means always what they seem, Tom," said mamma. "Now, from what we have seen, we might believe that your cousin Seba had robbed you, but what motive could he have? He enjoys the toys and games as much as you do, and it spoils his fun to miss them. He lives here, and will not go home for three years, and he knows that he has but to ask his uncle to give him anything he wants to have it. How could you think Seba would rob you?"

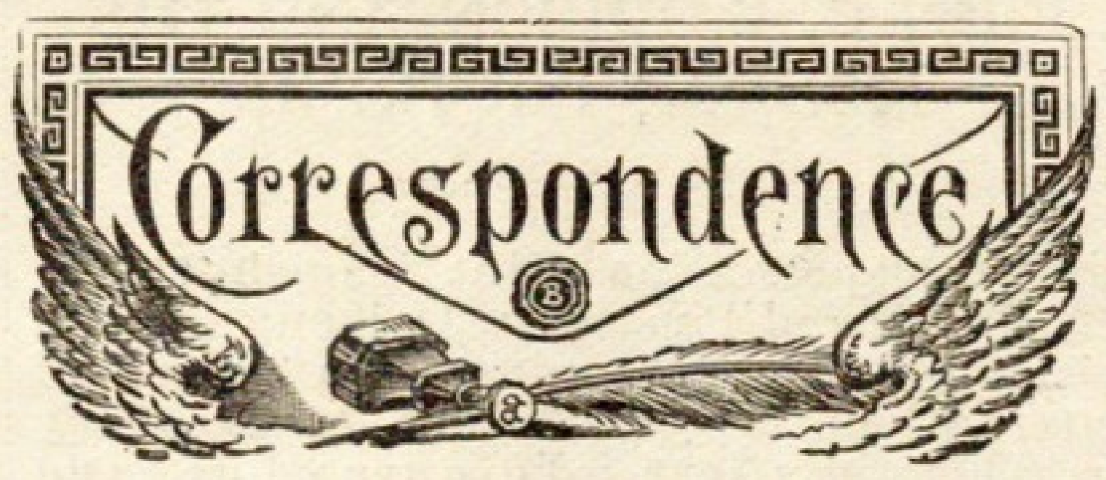
"He must do it to play a trick on me, then," I said. "But that makes me angry, too."

"And it is not like Seba," said mamma. "Tom, my dear, when Seba was a very little boy, his father wrote to me: 'I am sorry to say that my little fellow is a *somnambulist.* He frightens his mother by getting up in his sleep and wandering out of doors, and India is no safe place for that sort of work. The native servants think it something supernatural, and shiver and run to tell me when they see him, but dare not touch him.'"

"A sleep-walker!" I said. "And so Seba was asleep all the time?"

"Sound asleep," said mamma, "and it would have been dangerous to waken him, and might have made him very ill. You must never arouse a sleep-walker."

And so the mystery was explained. And the next day we told Seba, who was greatly astonished; and we went up to the garret together and brought the things down. They were all safe, and since then Seba's door is always locked on the outside at night.



**Cycling Dress.**—Daisy Dean asks what is the most appropriate cycling dress, and of what should it be made. *Answer:* The most sensible and becoming cycling costume is a moderately short skirt, shirt-waist, blazer or jacket and well-fitting high shoes, or, if low shoes are worn, a pair of trim overgaiters. A corset-waist should be worn, as, of course, the regular corset is not approved by any good authority. One sensible wheelwoman wears opera-length hose of black, a short petticoat of black satin, moderately full and buttoned together in the middle so as to give the effect of full trunks. The skirt and jacket are of rough-surfaced Priestley cravenette. There is a vest of black satin provided to wear with it, also shirt-waists and blouses, when desired. A sailor hat and thick gloves complete what is voted as one of the most practical outfits of the season. One advantage of the material is that it is strictly rainproof.

**The Study of Government.**—W. F. M. has an ambition to study the civil government of the United States, and asks what books would be most useful; also, if he could study it by himself. *Answer:* One of the first books and possibly one of the most useful is the Constitution of the United States. There is a constitution and by-laws and digest prepared for the use of the Senate and House of Representatives that contains much valuable information. There are very many books on constitutional government that you might find useful. Examine the catalogues of any library to which you have access, and see what an amount of writing has been done on this subject. If possible, consult some eminent lawyer or statesman and ascertain what course of study he followed. It is certainly much more desirable to study under a tutor, but a good deal may be done alone by careful reading and application.

**A Course of Study.**—Francis B. is a wood engraver, but having ambition to study and improve his mind, he asks what subject he could take up with advantage as occupation for his leisure hours. *Answer:* One of the best subjects for you to take up is political economy. This would give a sufficiently broad scope to your abilities and would engage your finest powers. In addition, there are so few persons that are able to understand this important branch of study that you might find yourself in a most eminent and enviable position after you had mastered the intricacies of this great subject. Should you desire something simpler, try botany, anthropology or mechanics. Why not look up facts in microscopy? This is a great field, and is one of the most interesting and fascinating of pursuits.

**One's Christian Name.**—Timidity asks if a young man may address by her Christian name a young woman of whom he is very fond, but to whom he is not engaged. *Answer:* Much depends upon circumstances. If you have recently made the young woman's acquaintance or have only met her a few times and that in a formal fashion, it would be manifestly improper to address her in such familiar terms. If you have known her for a long time and are on good terms with her family and the friendship seems to warrant it, there can be no serious objection. You will, however, do better to make a point in favor of conservatism rather than being too presuming.

**A Cure for Eczema.**—Mrs. M. F. M. read in the *Ledger* a cure for eczema, but as she has mislaid her paper she cannot remember it, therefore wishes it reprinted. *Answer:* She probably refers to Dioxide of Hydrogen, which is to be diluted with pure water in the proportion of three parts of water to one of dioxide. This for severe cases. In milder form, one part of dioxide to six of water. Apply several times daily, after washing the surface thoroughly with Castile soap and rinsing until all traces of soap are removed.

**Schools for Trained Nurses.**—Miss J. C. B. wants to know where there are any schools for trained nurses and how to secure admission thereto. *Answer:* Almost all hospitals have special classes for training nurses. In New York, Bellevue Hospital and the New York Hospital are both desirable. In order to get admitted you must write or apply, and sign agreements to do certain things. You must be of suitable age and give references, and also have a certain amount of education. Your best way will be to make an application, when you will be informed of what is required of you.

**Pronunciation of a Word.**—W. S. H. asks if there is any authority for pronouncing "superfluous" with the accent on the third instead of the second syllable. *Answer:* Not as far as the *Ledger* ever heard of. There are a few people in the world who are fond of introducing new ways of pronouncing words, but they fill the minds of students of the language with confusion, and should not be countenanced. Dictionaries are put before the public as authorities, and should be followed after they are acknowledged as such.

**Helps for the Deaf.**—R. C. P. has read in the *Ledger* that there are fan-shaped instruments that greatly assist the deaf to hear, and would like to know where such instruments can be obtained. *Answer:* By applying to any large dealer in surgical instruments, or probably to an optician, you could secure the desired information. Your address will be given to a specialist in diseases of the ear, who may be able to send you some valuable information.

**Lives of Noted Outlaws.**—Blue Eyes writes to know where the lives of the James boys may be obtained. *Answer:* The lives of these and other noted criminals are best obtained by a study of court records, where the plain and unvarnished stories of their lawless conduct, their outrages, murders, robberies and plunderings may be read in cold facts and without any veneer of romance or the glamour that writers of fiction throw about such characters.

**A Point of Etiquette.**—H. P. E. asks the following questions: 1. If one receives cards for an At Home and cannot go, is it a sufficient acknowledgment to send one's card with those of the other members of the family? 2. Would it be better form to write a note? 3. When should regrets be sent? 4. Is any acknowledgment necessary if one is invited only to the ceremony at the church, and not to the wedding reception? *Answer:* 1. The cards, with the word "Regrets," would be sufficient. 2. A note would not be as good form as the cards. 3. Regrets may be sent at any time before the reception. Of course, if you know from the first that you are not to go, it would be advisable to respond at once. A hostess always likes to know how many guests she is to provide for and whom to expect. 4. No acknowledgment is necessary when cards are sent only for the church ceremony.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

**The Non-Refillable Bottle Again.** An item in the *Ledger* has roused a good deal of discussion on the subject of a non-refillable bottle. A number of inventors claim to have patents that cover this idea, but, as far as they have been examined, they are all faulty, and do not stand the test of practical use. As a sample of the work that has been done in this line, the following criticism from the *Wine and Spirit Circular* may be interesting: "There have been so many devices submitted for approval, and invariably objected to for one reason or another, that the trade seems weary of being importuned, and it is gradually beginning to consider the idea impracticable, and to regard inventors as 'cranks,' while the glass manufacturers, having been surfeited in the matter of making trial samples, are free to admit they prefer not to be troubled by such work, and if they can be prevailed upon to do the work at all, they do it at their own convenience, which may mean a delay of weeks or months." From all of which it appears that the trade does not consider this want by any means met.

**The Influence of Winds on Vegetation.** At a meeting of the International Meteorological Congress—a report of which has recently been published—considerable attention was given to the effect of winds. It states that the destruction of the forests is responsible for many of the cold waves which we experience. Special mention is made of the disappearance of peach-trees from Michigan, which is said to be traceable directly to the deforestation of the State and the uninterrupted rush of cold winds. The hot, sweeping winds of the plains, known as desiccating winds, are held accountable for a loss of something like 21,000,000 bushels of corn in the State of Kansas alone. The absence of timber belts and wind-breaking forests allows these desiccating winds to sweep over many miles of cultivated land. These winds may reach a temperature of 108° or 109°, with humidity not over 20 or 25 per cent. at the outside. This report recommends extensive planting of timber as the best protection against cold waves and hot winds.

**Danger in Mineral Wool.** Mineral wool is made by blowing powerful jets of steam or hot air through iron, slag or certain sorts of rock. That this substance has possible dangers, has for some time been evident to scientists. It is said that these extremely fine fibers get into the skin, under the nails, into the eyes and are breathed into the lungs, producing serious hemorrhages. They are in reality closely akin to glass, especially those of slag, and this material should be handled with great caution. It is largely used in building for filling partitions and floors as a deadener of sound. It is also useful for packing pipes and many other purposes. Men who work in it use sticks and various implements for handling it, taking care not to touch it. In using this mineral wool, it is well to observe whether there are currents of air strong enough to lift it up to breathing level. If so, the worker may to advantage tie a fine but thin handkerchief over his mouth and nose.

**Freak Pottery.** Under this heading an eminent scientist describes what he calls freak pottery. In explorations and investigations of the mounds of Florida very large quantities of pieces of pottery are found. It is evident that they were broken before being buried with their owners, and that there must be some reason for breaking them. The freak, or ceremonial pottery, the latter name being supposed to describe the articles more accurately, appears to have been made for the purpose of burying with the dead. They are pierced with holes before they are baked, and were evidently useless for the purpose of ordinary dishes. According to traditions existing among some of the tribes, it is believed that the vessel had a sort of spirit, and that it must be broken or pierced with holes in order to liberate the spiritual essence. This accounts for the broken pottery and vessels so frequently found in Indian tombs.

**A New Bicycle Rim.** Among the improvements in bicycles may be mentioned rims of aluminum. These rims are said to be extremely rigid and durable, and, of course, are very light. A new cyclometer is shown which weighs but one and three quarter ounces, and is warranted accurate and reliable. A combined clock and cyclometer is another novelty. With this attachment the rider can set time and stop it again, thus taking his own speed with the utmost accuracy. It seems that all of the talk about increase of weight in the 1896 wheels has ended in nothing. Tires in some cases are thicker and stronger, consequently are very slightly increased in weight; but this is made up for in many instances by lighter construction elsewhere.

## WOMAN'S WORLD.

*All questions which may be asked on the subjects treated in this Department will be answered in the Correspondence column.*

**Fashion and Fancy.** Among the notable features of spring costumes will be the belted blouse, which promises to be not only fashionable but extremely stylish and—what is with many women more to the purpose—comfortable. Belted garments allow more freedom of action and much more agreeable under-dressing than women are willing to adopt when wearing fitted waists. The present fancy is for a blouse with under-arm seams, except with very full figures, when darts are considered desirable. This blouse extends about four inches below the waist-line and is kept in shape by a belt.

The fancy for belts is running riot. They are of gold wire or filigree or silver. Plainer ones are of leather variously decorated, and satin ribbon belts are also very much liked.

White serge suits and yachting dresses are made in this way, and the same model is used for semi-dressy outings in which tourists are so fond of indulging. Very narrow belts are worn with these white dresses, preferably of white leather. Some belts have large leather-covered buckles, others handsome gold buckles.

White alpaca is coming into favor as a rival to serge, of which many ladies are becoming weary, having worn it for many years past.

The duck suit is a standard article in the wardrobe of the well-dressed woman. There are very fine qualities among the new ducks, and these make extremely comfortable and serviceable costumes, although somewhat expensive as to laundry bills. Much is said about shrinking duck before making it up, but even when this is done it is necessary to allow either very large seams or to make the garment extremely loose, as in its contracting qualities it follows closely in the wake of the average all-wool flannels. It is a notable fact that after the third season some duck waists and jackets will shrink, and will finally become so small that the original owner finds it impossible to get into them. Just why this is no one seems able to discover. The most popular models for duck suits are the skirt and jacket. The jacket is specially liked for women who are at all stout, and the belt passes around the back and underneath the fronts, leaving these loose, which is thought to improve the figure very much. With these jackets are worn drooping vests of silk or lawn, with soft collar or turned-over collar and necktie.

Grass linens are among the most attractive of the season's standard goods. Those who wore them last year are enthusiastic over their good qualities, and they are already being sold and made up for all-through-the-season dresses. Handsome costumes are made of them by the addition of gold lace appliqué. These trimmings are set on, and the linen is cut away underneath them.

There are some very elaborate designs, and these are worked in with most excellent effect, making dresses that are not only handsome and stylish, but comfortable and cool-looking for extremely hot weather. Simpler ways of making up these linens are shown in the belted waists and plain skirts as described for serges. As unornamented dresses they are useful and not specially expensive. The extravagant use of gold lace which is being indulged in by many designers adds greatly to the expense of dresses, more particularly as most of the lace is not at all durable, but tarnishes after a few wearings.

There are white linen insertions and edgings that make up very prettily with these linens, also those in unbleached and écru tints.

Sensible and inexpensive dresses are made of the fine cheviots that are a feature of the cotton-goods stocks. These come in very narrow stripes or in mixed colors, and some of them have a slightly crinkled effect, on the seersucker order. In buying these goods, however, special attention should be given to their laundering qualities. Many of them lose all their beauty after the first washing. They do not appear to fade, but all of the brightness and clearness of the colors vanish, leaving a dull, cloudy effect, which robs them of all their attractiveness. Before purchasing they should be thoroughly tested. Reliable merchants refuse to warrant them fast colors. While some of the colors are durable, more of them are not, and it is scarcely worth while to go to the expense and trouble of making up a dress of cotton goods that is worthless after its first laundering.

**Fashion Notes.** A suitable dress for ordinary occasions is made with a skirt of silk with satin stripes, or of handsome woolen goods. With this is worn a coat basque with leg-o'-mutton sleeves. The coat has a turned-over collar and revers of velvet; the edges are finished with passementerie or gimp. If this is to be worn for the street there is a collar and vest of silk. If for more dressy wear, a stock collar and a fanciful front of lace and ribbon are used with a ribbon belt and a fall of lace that covers the front of the skirt.

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Mention the New York Ledger

# WOMAN'S WORLD.

(*Continued.*)

The sleeves of the most stylish dresses droop from the shoulders and have more fullness at the elbows than at any point above. To let us down very gradually, however, from the shoulder fullness there are full ruffles like the eaves of a house that project out over the tops of the collapsed sleeves.

A dressy afternoon costume is made of white Irish poplin. It has the usual full-gored skirt and a waist fitted at the sides and back, and with entire front and very full sleeves of crépon. The collar, shoulder-seams, front and division between the puffs of the sleeves are trimmed with gold galloon.

Bright green is to be one of the popular colors of the season. It is specially liked with the new linens and dimities, which are among the most desirable for the coming warm-weather dresses.

A girl's hat has a wide brim, peaked over the front and faced with velvet. The Tam O'Shanter crown is of velvet, and there are loops and quill feathers at the side.

Skirts of lawn and dimity and organdie are made up with ruffles, trimmed with narrow Valenciennes lace, with a scalloped edge.

Heliotrope and orange is a new combination. It is just tolerable if the proper shades are placed together. If not, it is atrocious.

Collarettes and fronts of green taffeta are much admired, and will be worn with dresses of almost all summer materials.

White satin and silk are made into collars, collarettes and cuffs to wear with thin dresses.

For information, thanks are due to Messrs. James McCreery & Co., Arnold, Constable & Co. and B. Altman & Co.

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**Visiting as a Fine Art.** "I always like to have Mrs. X come to the house, and often invite her even when I have been overrun with company, and this because she is what I call the restful guest," said a woman whose country house is a favorite resort of a very large circle of friends.

"I have, as you know," she continued, "a very extensive acquaintance, and am fond of entertaining, but there is such a difference in people! Last year I had with me, for two weeks, one of the sweetest little women I ever knew, in some respects, but it was necessary to adjust her every day, so to speak. She was extremely primitive in some of her notions and awfully prim in others. Her principles were extravagantly high, all right, of course, and proper, but she exploded them, as it were, at many inconvenient times. While she was in the house, I felt it my duty to keep an eye on her continually, not that she did anything dreadful, but, out of certain lines, she was wholly destitute of tact. In the first place, she was very fond of rising early. At the time of her first visit, on the morning after her arrival, she was downstairs at least an hour before breakfast was ready. She found the maids sweeping and dusting, the man was beating the rugs, and there was a general house-cleaning time going on. Having no rest for the soul of her foot in the regions below, she tripped upstairs, put on her hat and wrap and walked up and down on the porches until she was warned by preparations that sweeping there would be next in order. Then she meandered up and down the gravel walks. When breakfast was announced and she came in, she told me in the sweetest possible way, but with just the least little accent of reproach, that she had been downstairs for over an hour.

"Of course, the maids were more or less uncomfortable, thinking that she might be annoyed by what was actually necessary to be done. Of this, however, she seemed utterly oblivious. During breakfast she repeated the statement that she had been downstairs something more than an hour. A rather uncomfortable silence was averted by a very witty guest, who always jumps into every social breach of this sort with some bright remark that puts everybody in good humor.

"That was a sample of that visit. I could but notice the contrast between her manner and management and those of Mrs. X, who slips into the domestic grooves of an establishment as though she were born and made for the place. She makes her appearance in the morning at precisely the right moment, she disappears as if by magic when anything occurs that makes her absence desirable, and best of all, she will take a whole roomful of guests with her, and entertain them so graciously and manage them so beautifully that they haven't the slightest idea that they are either carried off or managed at all. There is no wonder that Mrs. X has more invitations than she can possibly accept, and that she is a welcome guest everywhere.

"One of the disagreeable features of entertaining, especially young persons or those unaccustomed to going about very much, is that they seem to expect to be amused and looked after. Those people who have no resources of their own, and are compelled to rely solely on others for mental occupation, are most unfortunate, and, as guests, are not without serious objections.

"Every child should be taught from its earliest years a certain amount of self-dependence, and should be brought up with the idea that it must never become a tax on others for occupation during its leisure hours. If this could be done, visiting and receiving guests would be a much more agreeable affair than it often is at present.

"It is incumbent on a hostess to provide a certain amount of pleasant reading, and if one has a well-stocked library, certain works that interest the guest may be placed in her apartment.

"There are varying opinions on just how far the hostess is under obligations to look after those who are enjoying her hospitality; but, all things being equal, guests will find themselves much more welcome and everything much more agreeable if they form a habit of self-reliance and self-amusement. One may easily go out for a walk or on an errand by herself and seek the time to do this when the mistress of the house is occupied by her domestic affairs.

"A dependent visitor, one who is unable to go about by herself, and who fancies that she is neglected if she is not continually looked after, is not the most welcome addition to a party, especially in a country house."

### Patterns.

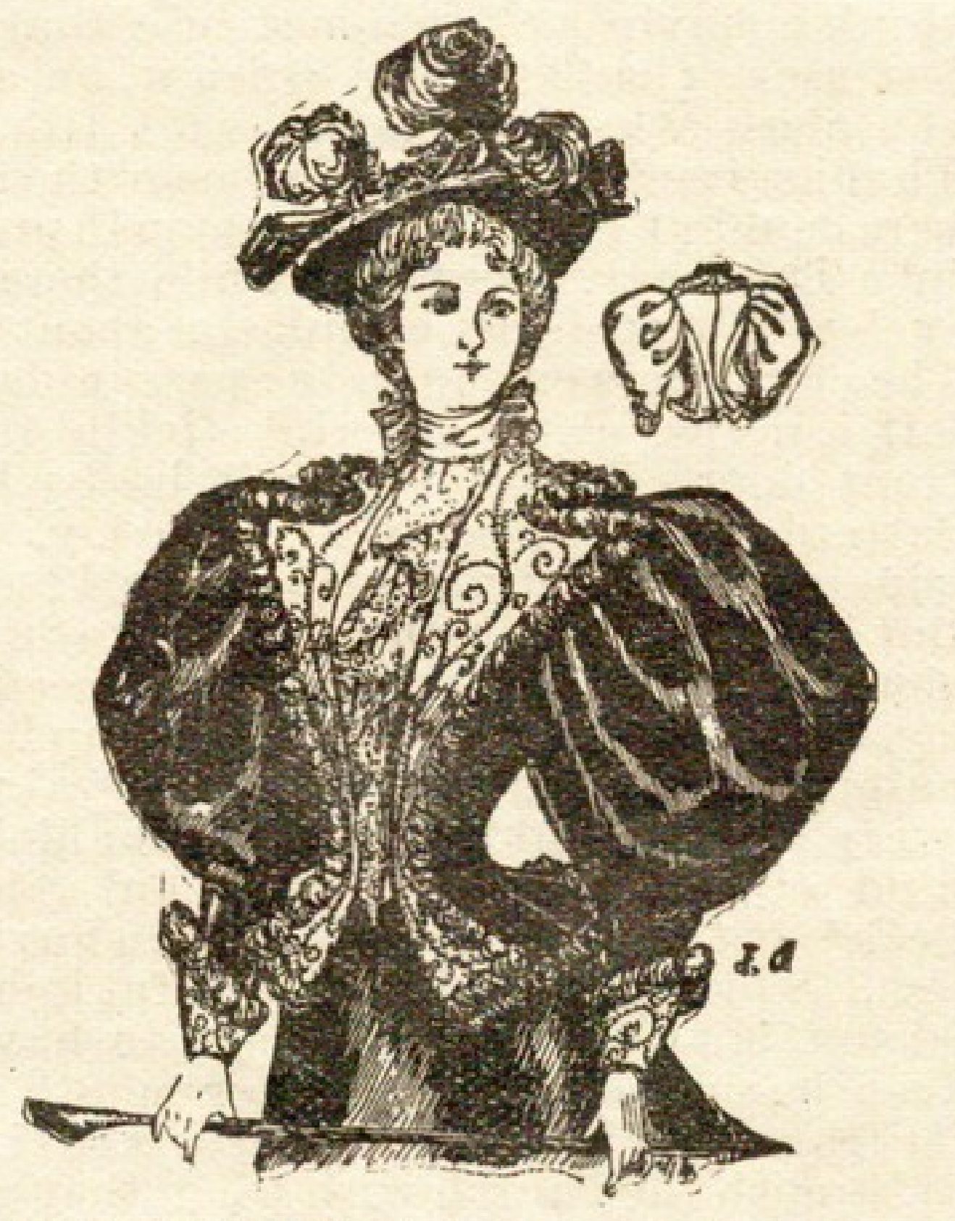
We have made special arrangements by which we can supply our readers with dress-patterns by mail, prepaid, at the nominal price of ten cents per pattern.

Each issue of the *Ledger*, hereafter, will contain illustrations of two or more new styles, for which patterns will be supplied to order. Parties ordering will please use a small sheet of plain writing-paper, small enough to go into an ordinary envelope, write name very plainly and give post-office and State, together with street and number, wherever necessary. Be careful to give correct bust-measure and the number of the pattern desired, using the number under the illustration. Inclose ten cents in stamps for each pattern ordered. State that you are a reader of the *Ledger*, otherwise these patterns will cost you 25, 30 or 35 cents each, as the case may be, these being the regular prices for which the patterns are sold.

The patterns selected for illustration in this issue are numbered 6687, 6695 and 6696.

### Ladies' Louis XV. Jacket Basque.

Black velvet, creamy satin, jet embroidery and ostrich-feather ruching entered into the composition of this stylish coat-basque, a jabot of rich lace being arranged to fall softly in center of vest-front. The style is modified from those of the sixteenth century, which display to advantage the rich and handsome brocades now fashionable. The smooth-fitting vest is finished in pointed outline, and closes in center front. The jacket-fronts extend considerably below the waist-line, the close-fitting back displaying the stylish flutes or ripples now *la mode.* The stylish revers are graduated at the waist-line, widening to the lower edge of jacket-fronts, the notched collar meeting in a seam at center back. Stylish gigot sleeves stand out with bouffant effect at the elbow, the close-fitting wrists being completed with pointed, flaring cuffs. Handsome coat-basques in this style are made from rich brocades, with revers, collars and cuffs of velvet, or vice versa, the feather ruching being omitted, and the stock-collar and vest-fronts of brocade. Crépon, broadcloth, satin, plain and mixed novelty suitings will combine with silk, velvet or brocade to develop stylish coat-basques by the mode.



6687—LADIES' LOUIS XV JACKET BASQUE

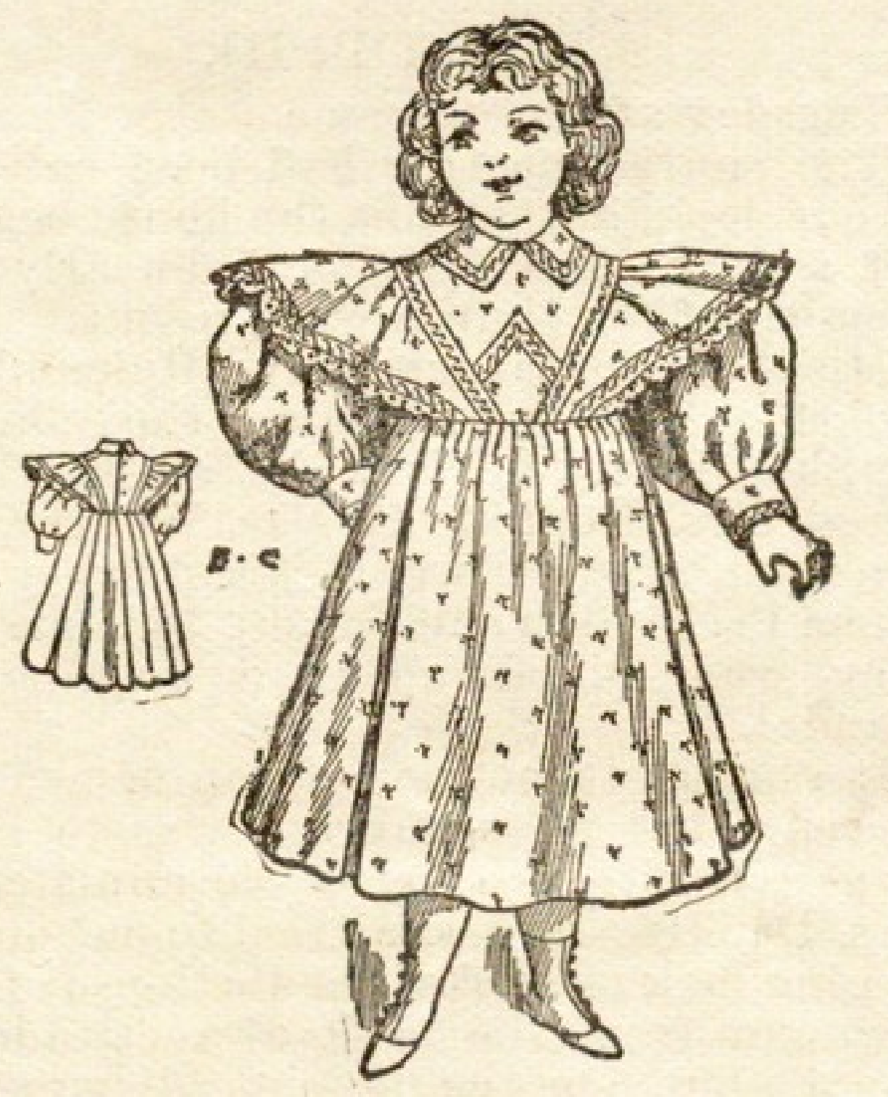
Pattern **6687** is cut in six sizes, viz.: 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure.

Quantity of material 44 inches wide required for basque 38 inches bust measure is 4 yards.

Retail price of pattern **6687** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

### Child's Dress.

Figured challie in green and white is here daintily decorated with lace edging and narrow green ribbon put on with fancy stitching. The simple little dress has a plain, smooth body, fitted with shoulder and under-arm seams, which closes in center back with buttons and button-holes. Full gathered bretelles are arranged over the shoulders, an inverted "V" being formed by the trimming in front. The neck is finished by a pretty rolling collar that flares apart in front and back. The full bishop sleeves are gathered top and bottom, and completed with round cuffs at the wrists. The full, round skirt is deeply hemmed at the foot, the top being gathered and sewed with a cord to the lower edge of waist. The dress is specially adapted to wash fabrics, such as gingham, lawn, dimity, etc., embroidery and lace edging, insertion or fancy stitching making suitable decoration. Flannelette, merino, cashmere, camel's-hair, or soft serge will also make up prettily by this pattern.



6696—CHILD'S DRESS

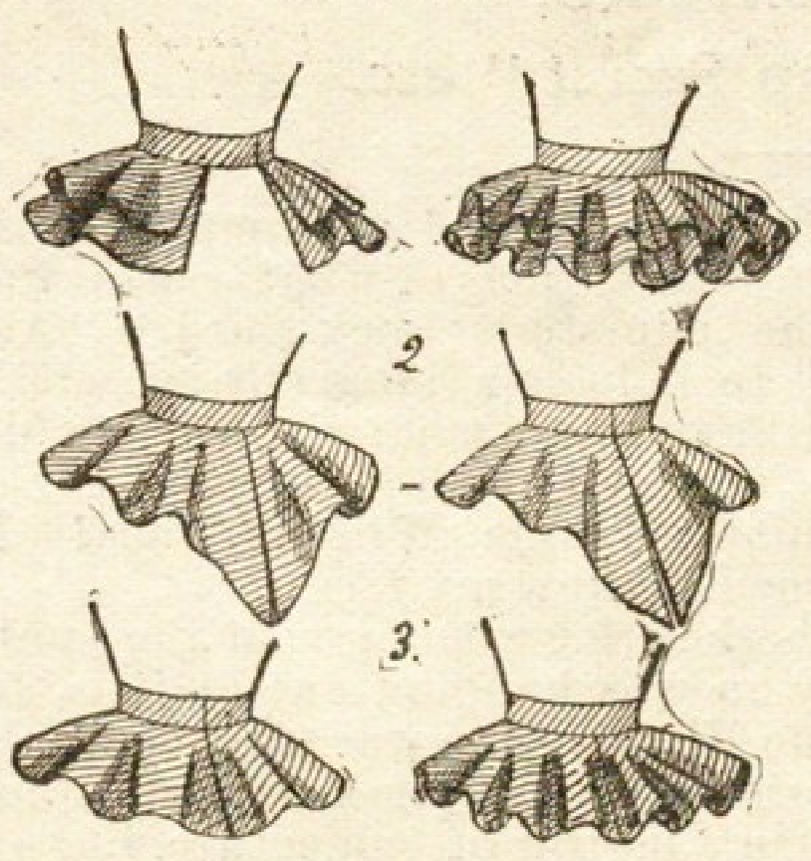
Quantity of Material 36 Inches Wide.

| | |
|---|---|
| For 1 year old | 2½ yds. |
| " 4 " " | 2¾ " |
| " 8 " " | 3 " |

Retail price of pattern **6696** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

### Ladies' Ripple Basques.

Three different styles of this fashionable addition to waists and short basques are included in the pattern. They are usually made from the material to match or contrast with the waist, and when the double basque is used, the lower one can be of silk or velvet to match the collar, revers or vest of basque. These basques are distinctive features of the new spring styles, and so will be found useful in remodeling waists or gowns for the coming season. No. 1 is a double basque that is joined in a seam at center back and flares widely apart in front, the edges reaching the front darts of the waist. No. 2 is shaped with deep points front and back, the edges coming closely together. No. 3 is a single round basque joined in center back, with front edges that meet close together.



6695—LADIES' RIPPLE BASQUES

Pattern **6695** is cut in three sizes, viz.: 22, 26 and 30 inches waist measure.

Quantity of material 36 inches wide required for a lady having a 26-inch waist measure is 1 yard for No. 1 design; ¾ of a yard for No. 2 design, and ⅝ of a yard for No. 3 design.

Retail price of pattern **6695** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

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**Renovating Black Goods.** "One can scarcely avoid feeling a little bit of impatience at seeing a mistaken idea persistently insisted in and a course followed out simply because a notion has taken root in the feminine mind," said a woman of large experience and one who usually knows what she is talking about.

"Day after day we read directions for cleaning black goods, especially silks; a part of the process recommended being to begin while they are slightly damp and iron them until they are thoroughly dry. As a matter of fact, a hot iron should never touch silk. It is fatal to its beauty, and as there are ways to restore this fabric that render it almost as handsome as new goods, it seems the sheerest folly to stick to such an antiquated notion as ironing it dry.

"The great objection to the improved process is that it involves quite a little time and considerable hard work, but when the task is completed the operator will be so astonished at the result that the ironing method will never afterward be received with any degree of toleration.

"The first necessity is a wide, smooth board, or, in the absence of this, a piece of smooth oilcloth, not less than a yard and a half long and three-quarters of a yard wide. This may be placed on a table or board and firmly fastened. In a comfortably large family, it is well worth while to have a board for this special purpose. If one can secure a single board twenty-eight inches or so in width, this is well, but if two boards must be joined, this must be carefully done, as no hint of the union must be evident to make a ridge or a mark on the surface of the fabric. In any case, the oilcloth covering is desirable, as it keeps the board from warping or splitting, and if it is made up of sections, smooths the irregularities and permits of a much better finish to the goods.

"When all is ready make a rather strong decoction of soap bark. This is prepared by putting an ordinary teacupful of bark into about two quarts of water and placing on the back of the range to simmer for several hours, then add another quart of water and pour the liquid into another vessel, adding more water and placing the bark again over the fire. With a piece of black cloth, or what is better, a moderately soft bristle brush like an ordinary clothes brush, wet the silk thoroughly with the liquid, then with the hand or a folded rag, the size of an ironing holder, rub the silk straight way of the grain until all the moisture is rubbed out, then turn it over, wet it again and rub dry as before.

"Each piece must be handled separately, and under no circumstances must it be folded. Now hang the sections over a straight stick—a line is not as good, for it sags, and may make wrinkles in the material. When all of the pieces are gone over, take them all from the stick and select the largest one, smoothing it upon the board, being sure that the grain of the fabric is absolutely straight, and stroking it with the cloth or hand until it is firmly attached to the board. If necessary, a little moisture may be added to facilitate this operation. All of the pieces of one size are to be placed one over the other in the same way, wetting them when it is necessary, and smoothing them till they adhere firmly to each other. Then the small pieces are put on, graduating them in size so that all of the edges may lie smoothly and not overlap some other portion. Put a folded cloth over the board and place it in position at an angle of about forty-five degrees. After a few moments, the superfluous water will begin to drip away. Do not disturb the silk at all for some hours, or until the water has long ceased to fall from it. If the weather is cold, leave it until the following day; if extremely warm, put it in a cool place and let it remain undisturbed for at least twelve hours; then with the thumb and finger carefully lift each piece. Very likely there will be more or less dampness, and this must be removed by spreading the pieces upon some smooth surface, or over sticks or a clothes-frame. When the silk is dry, if the work has been properly managed, there will be neither a wrinkle nor a fold left in the goods. With care almost all marks of stitches may be taken out. If there have been shirrings or plaitings, take a breadth of silk between the hands, grasping the edges firmly, being careful that the grain of the goods runs straight from hand to hand, then move the hands back and forth, so as to draw the silk on the bias, repeating this process a number of times. This must be done while the silk is wet. It will work the displaced threads back into their original shape, and greatly improves the appearance of the material. One trying may not bring this process to perfection; but it is safe to say that after a few experiments no other means of cleaning black silk will be adopted. This course of treatment works equally well with black wool goods, and is managed precisely in the same way. For double-width fabrics the material is folded in the original folds when laid away to drip. Care must be taken that the goods do not dry in streaks. To avoid this, keep the board covered with a thick cloth until all the moisture has drained away. It sometimes is desirable to place a much thicker cloth around the edges, and a lighter one where the material is very thick on the board.

"As silk is an animal substance, and originally a liquid that becomes solidified by exposure to the atmosphere, it stands to reason that a hot iron should never touch it. It seems strange, indeed, that among people who ought to know better the ironing of silk is recommended season after season."

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**Date Pudding.** One egg, a gill and a half of milk, a tablespoonful of butter, two tablespoonfuls of water and enough flour to make a thick batter. Beat the egg until light, and add the milk. Melt the butter with the water and add; then the flour, sifted, and containing a teaspoonful of baking powder. Stone and chop enough dates to fill a cup, dust with flour and stir into the pudding. Steam in a buttered mold for an hour and fifteen minutes. Serve with any good sauce.

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**Stewed Mushrooms.** Stew a quart of mushrooms for about twenty minutes in enough good stock to cover well. Add a tablespoonful of butter, and thicken with a teaspoonful of wheat flour. Boil slowly for ten minutes longer, and just before taking from the fire add half a cupful of cream. Serve on very hot toast, on a very hot dish.

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**Indian Pudding.** To one quart of scalded milk add one cup of molasses and five tablespoonfuls of cornmeal. Melt a piece of butter the size of an egg into a pudding-dish, then pour in the mixture. Bake in a moderate oven.

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# Sabrina Peek's Discovery.

### BY EBEN E. REXFORD,

**Author of "The Swamp Secret," etc.**

## CHAPTER I.

Mrs. Dopkins was just getting ready to roll out the crust for the apple pie she was making for dinner, when some one rapped at the kitchen door.

"Dear me!" she said, under her breath; "that's S'briny Peek's knock, sure 's I'm a live woman. I'd ruther the old boy himself had dropped in than her, with her tattle an' gossip. No knowin' how long she'll stay, a-henderin' me. But I don't see 's there's any help for it," and, with a sigh of resignation, she wiped her floury hands on her apron and went to the door.

"Good mornin', S'briny. I knew 'twas you soon 's I heard your knock. Come in 'n' set down by the stove. It's kind o' sharp out, ain't it?"

"Yes, it's gittin' winter weather right along," responded the shrill tones of Miss Sabrina, as she sat down. "No—I ain't a-goin' to stop," as Mrs. Dopkins made as if she were waiting to take her visitor's shawl and bonnet. "I didn't come to set, but on an arrant. I'm goin' down to Mis' Ho'cum's to help her with her sewin' fer a day or two. My! how plain you c'n see the passunidge sence the leaves have fell," with a look in the direction of a little brown house half a mile up the road.

"Yes, it's a'most like havin' new neighbors, I tell Silas," responded Mrs. Dopkins. "Looks real cheerful to see their light ev'nin's."

"I heard Mis' Cooper was a-goin to her folks, Thanksgivin'," said Miss Sabrina.

"I hadn't heard nothin' about it," said Mrs. Dopkins, "but I shouldn't wonder ef 'twas so, an' she'd gone, fer I see a wagon standin' at the gate quite a spell yest'day, an' I seem to remember, now I come to think of it, that the childern was in it the las' time I looked out, an' the minister was a-helpin' a woman in. Some o' her folks drove over after her, I s'pose."

"Ain't the minister goin', too?" asked Miss Sabrina. "I sh'd s'pose he would."

"I can't say, as I hadn't heard o' Mis' Cooper's goin' till you spoke of it," answered Mrs. Dopkins, "but it can't be, fer, you know, he give out las' Sund'y that there'd be reg'lar services Thanksgivin'."

"Is he goin' to bach it while she's gone?" asked Miss Sabrina, ignoring Mrs. Dopkins's declaration of lack of knowledge as to the minister and his family.

"'Tain't likely," answered Mrs. Dopkins. "Seems to me I see a woman sweepin' off the back steps this mornin'. M'lissy Jones has b'en to work there fer quite a spell, 'n' prob'ly she's stayin' while Mis' Cooper's gone."

"I sh'd think that 'd make talk," said Miss Sabrina. "'Twould ef *some* o' the folks in this neighborhood found it out."

"I don't see why 't should," said Mrs. Dopkins. "We all know what kind o' folks the minister 'n M'lissy be, 'n' I don't see anything out o' the way in her keepin' house for him while his wife's gone."

"Oh, it's all right, of course," said Miss Sabrina, in a tone that implied it might be all wrong. "I ain't a-findin' fault, but *some* folks *might*, you know. I'd trust the minister 'n' M'lissy fur 's the next one. But—good land!—ef 'tain't ha'f-pas' ten! I mus' be a-goin' or I won't git there time to do ha'f a day's work. I run in to see ef you'd lend your polinay pattern—the one you made up your brown mohair after. Mis' Ho'cum, she said she liked that better 'n any other she'd seen, but she didn't feel free to ask you fer it, bein 's you sent an' bought it; but I told her *I'd* as soon ask as not."

"She's welcome to," said Mrs. Dopkins, taking a roll of brown paper from behind the looking-glass. "Mis' Strong, she had it las' week, an' jest bro't it home Satterday, 'n' I hadn't put it away yet. Come in ag'in, S'briny, when you've got more time to visit."

"Yes, I will," answered Miss Sabrina, as she rose and pulled her red-and-black fascinator over her ears. "I have to be dretful careful of my head this weather. If I don't I'm real sure to git newralgy, an' it'll hang on all winter. Wall, good mornin;" and Miss Sabrina took her departure.

When she came to the forks of the road halfway between the Dopkins farm and the minister's place, she paused for a moment, debating with herself as to which road to take.

"One's about as nigh 's t' other, so I guess I'll go by the passunidge," she concluded.

As she came near the house, she saw the minister in the back yard, where the clothesline was, sweeping paths in the slight snow that had fallen.

"It mus' be they're washin', though it's the last o' the week," thought Miss Sabrina. "That looks dretful shif'less, seein' 's they keep a hired girl. Elder Bascom's wife didn't have no hired girl, an' she al'ays got her washin' out Monday, rain or shine."

Just then a woman came to the back door and called to the minister, who responded to the call by going into the house. Presently he and the woman came out, bringing between them a basket of steaming clothes fresh from the wringer.

"Good land! Ef he ain't helpin' the hired girl wash!" exclaimed Miss Sabrina, who had paused behind a clump of bushes to make observations of what was taking place in the minister's back yard. "An' he's goin' to help her hang out the clo'es, too! I'd like to know what Mis' Cooper 'd say to that, ef she knew? I *would* wear a sunbunnit if I was M'lissy Jones! I'd be 'shamed to show my face!"

Whether the woman with the sunbonnet on, who was hanging out clothes, felt the shame Miss Sabrina was sure *she* would have experienced under similar circumstances remained a matter of conjecture, but she persistently kept her face turned from the road.

"She won't look this way," commented Miss Sabrina. "I wouldn't ef I was her. Good Lord!"

This ejaculation, which came with the suddenness and force of an explosive, was caused by a sight that fairly took away her breath. The woman in the back yard had begun to hang clothes at one end of the line and the minister at the other. As they came together and the last piece was taken from the basket and pinned upon the line, the minister very deliberately put his hands on each side of the sunbonneted head of the woman who was at work with him, tipped it back, and then his face for a moment disappeared in the depths of the bonnet. When he withdrew it, the wearer of the sunbonnet dealt him a sounding box on the ear.

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Miss Sabrina, fairly pale with the excitement of the discovery she had made. "If I hain't seen with my own eyes the minister a kissin' the hired girl! An' that right in broad daylight, too! It don't seem 's ef it could be so, but *'tis*, fer my eyes hain't deceived me, that's cert'in! My land! I wouldn't 'a' b'leeved it ef anybody'd told, but sence I see it myself, I can't help b'leevin' it! Wall, I do declare! I never'd 'a' dreamed o' such a thing! Seems 's ef you couldn't trust nobody nowdays! My goodness! Ef this gits out what a fuss 't 'll make! It'll turn the minister out o' the church, an', like 's not Mis' Cooper'll try fer a divorce. I would, if I was her."

By this time the offending parties had gone into the house, and Miss Sabrina, concluding that no more was to be seen, went her way, pondering on the awful depravity of man—and woman, as well—and wondering what the world was coming to.

## CHAPTER II.

In less than twenty-four hours it was all over the neighborhood that the minister had been seen kissing the hired girl.

Of course, the report caused a great sensation, for the minister was a man who had won the confidence and esteem of the people. Some refused to believe the story—they knew better. Others felt as if the last blow had been dealt to their faith in human nature, but they also felt that they ought to take some stock in a story of which it was said there was the most positive proof.

"Who started it?" asked Deacon Bowers.

No one could tell just where the story originated.

"If I knew who set it a goin', I c'd tell whether there was anything to it or not," he said. "But, of course, there ain't anything to it. I'd as soon think o' *my* kissin' the hired girl as the minister doin' it. It's jest neighborhood tattle, an' you'll find it out so."

"I dunno 'bout that," said Mr. Weaver, with whom Deacon Bowers was conversing. "Mr. Ho'cum, he seems to feel purty sure there's more to it than we think for, an' he says there's goin' to be a complaint made to the church. I hope not, fer it'll make an awful rumpus, an' there'll be no end o' hard feelin's over it, some sidin' one way an' some t'other."

"But if there's anything to it it'll *have* to come out if there's a church-meetin'," said Deacon Bowers. "I hain't heard anything 'bout havin' one afore, but I hope they will call one an' sift the thing. If it's so we want to know it, an' if it ain't we want to find out who's mean enough to start such a ridic'lous story. I ain't agoin' to b'leeve a word on 't till I hear more about it. You jest take my word for it, it'll turn out to be all a mess o' nonsense. Elder Cooper a-kissin' M'lissy Jones!" and jolly old Deacon Bowers laughed till he was red in the face.

"I hope you're right," said Mr. Weaver, with a long face; "but we read of a dretful sight o' wickedness in high places nowdays, an' mebbe it's comin' nigh home."

"What does the minister say about it?" asked Deacon Bowers.

"I dunno 's anybody's spoke to him yet," said Mr. Weaver.

"He's the man to go to to git at the facts," said the deacon. "It's all hearsay to me, but I'm agoin' to take it on myself to go an' tell him what's bein' said, an' set him on track o' the bisness."

Deacon Bowers went to the minister's house, but found no one at home. A card in the front window said that he was out of town—would be gone two or three days.

"That's bad," said the deacon. "It'll git into the papers afore he gits home."

The women of the neighborhood "run in" to talk with each other about the scandal that was agitating the community from center to circumference.

"My, ain't it awful!" said Mrs. Weaver to Mrs. Dopkins. "Nobody knows how it makes me feel. I sh'd as soon have thought it o' 'Lishur."

"I don't b'leeve it," said Mrs. Dopkins. "I can't, 'cause I've too good an opinion o' the minister, 's well 's M'lissy. It's ruther queer we can't find out more about it. Seem's ef 't was bein' kep' dretful still by whoever 'tis that's knowin' to what's happened. I've asked sevril, an' they don't seem to have any idee where the story started. They heard it from somebody, an' that somebody heard it from somebody else, an' that's the way it goes."

"I heard some of 'em say they thought Mis' Cooper wouldn't live with him when she found it out," said Mrs. Weaver. "I wouldn't wonder a mite if she didn't. She's a dretful high-sperited woman. I couldn't blame her. I don't feel 's ef I could live with 'Lishur ef he'd ben onfaithful to me in that way."

Mrs. Dopkins had to smile to think of Mr. Weaver in the character of a gay Lothario.

"I heard there was goin' to be a church-meetin' called for nex' Tuesday," said Mrs. Weaver. "The clerk, he told 'Lishur this mornin' that he'd been asked to call one, an' that certain parties—he wouldn't say who they was—would prefer charges ag'inst the minister fer immoral conduct. Jest think o' havin' a church-meetin' o' that kind jest afor' Thanksgivin'. 'Lishur, he asked the clerk why they didn't wait till after Thanksgivin'; but he said some o' the members couldn't feel to uphold a man in preachin' a Thanksgivin' sermon while there was such scan'l'us stories circulatin' about him. The clerk, he went up to the passunidge an' left a notice o' the meetin' stickin' in the front door. The elder won't be back till Satterday night, I heard some one say. He's gone over to Woodville to her folks, I reckon. But he'll find it afore preachin'-time Sunday mornin', an' it'll jest upset him, seems to me. I don't see how he can get up in the pulpit an' preach when he knows what everybody's thinkin' about. *I* couldn't. I kind o' s'mise the Ho'cums an' S'briny Peek's got more to do with it than anybody else. S'briny, she looks so dretful knowin' when it's mentioned, an' seems to have to keep her mind on keepin' her mouth shet, fer fear she'll let out suthin' she's savin' up to 'stonish the church with when they git to the meetin'. Leastwise, that's the way it looks to me. I do hope 't will turn out to be a mess o' talk, but I'm dretful afraid there's more to it than some think, Mis' Dopkins. 'Lishur says 't don't seem 's ef anybody 'd have the gall to start such a story out o' hull cloth if there wa'n't suthin' to it."

"'Twill be real hard fer Elder Cooper to preach Sunday after he finds out what folks are sayin'," said Mrs. Dopkins. "I'll bet one thing: He'll preach a purty plain sermon. He ain't givin' to mincin' matters."

But Elder Cooper didn't preach a sermon in Green Valley on Sunday, as he was expected to. Saturday night the minister from Woodville came over. Mr. Cooper had exchanged pulpits with him for the next day, and would not be at home until Monday or Tuesday of the coming week.

"He's got wind o' what's goin' on," said Mr. Holcumb, meaningly. "I didn't much think he'd be here to-day. He dassent!"

"Fiddlesticks!" exclaimed Deacon Bowers, greatly to the scandalization of Mr. Holcumb, who afterward told Miss Sabrina, who was still stopping at his house, that "he fetched it out jest as some men swear, an' it hurt his feelin's to hear a deacon in the church use such a word in the sanctuary o' the Lord."

## CHAPTER III.

Tuesday afternoon came.

The church-meeting had been called for two o'clock, but at one the house began to fill, and by the time appointed nearly every member of the church was present.

Miss Sabrina sat with Mrs. Holcumb, and looked as wise and solemn as the Sphinx.

"She tries to look 's ef she felt bad," whispered Mrs. Dopkins to Mrs. Weaver, "but she don't. You c'n see she's jest in her glory. Them Peeks al'ays felt right to home when they was mixed up in a neighborhood scandal."

It seemed to be the opinion of nearly all present that Miss Sabrina was to be the principal witness against the minister. As Mrs. Dopkins said, she tried to put on a becoming look of sorrow for the lapse of a fellow-man from the path of rectitude and honor, but she could not disguise the fact that she felt, at heart, quite as much elation as the craziest Anarchist ever experienced when he stood in a crowd with a bomb under his coat, which was to be the agent, a little later on, of death to some and consternation to all.

"Who knows if the minister's got home yet?" asked some one.

"He hadn't when we come by," answered Deacon Bowers.

"Wall, it's time to begin," said Mr. Holcumb. "There ain't no use o' waitin', as I see."

"But what's the use o' goin' on 'thout he's here?" asked Deacon Bowers.

"We can call the meetin' to order 'n' prefer the charge, 'n' then adjourn to some other time," said the clerk.

The meeting was accordingly called to order, and Deacon Bowers was appointed moderator. He rose to "make a few remarks."

"Brothers 'n' sisters," he said, "you all know what we've come here for. It's a sollum occasion. I'm free to say that I don't b'leeve a word o' the story that's goin' 'round about Elder Cooper."

Here Miss Sabrina gave a sort of sniff, and looked at Mrs. Holcumb, as much as to say: "He don't, eh? Wait till he hears what I've got to say!"

"I don't b'leeve a word on't," continued the deacon, "but it's proper we sh'd look into the matter 'n' see whether there's any truth in it or not. I sh'd like to hear the charge read."

The clerk rose, hemmed, adjusted his spectacles, and proceeded to read the charge:

"I hereby charge Brother George Cooper, pastor of this church, with being guilty of immoral conduct. [Signed] ISRAEL HOLCUMB."

"Brothers 'n' sisters," explained Mr. Holcumb, rising as the clerk sat down, "I preferred the charge, as I felt it my duty to, but I ain't the one who see what was done. That person come to me an' told what she'd seen, an' asked what I tho't she orter do, an' I told her she orter labor with the minister, but she said she didn't feel 's ef she could." Here Miss Sabrina put her handkerchief to her eyes, and heaved several deep sighs. "Yes, brothers an' sisters, she said she couldn't, but I might prefer a charge, ef I felt as ef it orter be done, an' I did it. I feel as bad over it as annybody can, but I know my duty to the church an' to my brothers an' sisters an' the cause, an' I ain't a-goin to let my prejudice in anybody's favor make me shirk my duty, even ef 'tis dretful onpleasant."

"That's a dig at me," whispered Deacon Bowers to Mr. Dopkins.

Just at this juncture there was a sound of feet at the door, and it opened a moment later to admit the minister and his wife.

Miss Sabrina turned pale for a moment. Then she straightened herself up with a determined look on her face, strong, if not serene, in the consciousness of a duty to perform, while a little rustle of excitement and anticipation went over the congregation.

"The fun's about to begin," whispered Deacon Bowers to Mr. Dopkins.

"I must beg your pardon, brothers and sisters, for being tardy at so important a meeting as this," the minister said, as he pulled off his overcoat, as if getting ready for business. "Brother Crane, of Woodville, with whom I exchanged last Sabbath, came home last night and brought me the startling news that I was charged with being guilty of terrible misdemeanors, also that a church meeting was to be held to-day. Accordingly, my wife and I started early enough this morning to get here before noon, but we had the misfortune to break our wagon when about half way here, and the accident delayed us considerably. However, here I am, ready to hear what any one has to say against me. Will the clerk read the charge, please?"

The clerk did so.

"Brother Holcumb prefers the charge, therefore it will devolve upon him to give the particulars of my guilt and produce witnesses," said the minister. "Brother Holcumb, let us hear from you."

Brother Holcumb began to realize the unpleasant position he was in, now that he was face to face with the minister; but he felt that he could not shirk from the performance of "his duty," though he would have been glad to do so; and he rose to his feet, cleared his throat several times, blew his nose long and loudly, and began in that solemn and sepulchral tone which characterized him whenever he "talked in meeting."

"I made the charge ag'inst the elder because I felt as ef some one orter do so. I ain't sayin' it's true. That ain't fer me to say; but I have good backin' fer what I did, an' I call on Sister Sabrina Peek to rise an' tell what she knows."

Then Mr. Holcumb dropped into his seat, evidently greatly relieved to think that his part of the performance was over.

Miss Sabrina rose stiffly and began:

"Brothers and sisters, it's a painful duty that revolves upon me. I feel 's ef I couldn't discharge it, an' yet—I *must*. Brother Holcum' made the charge, an' I'm prepared to stan' by it. I feel to deplore—"

"Will you please come to the point at once and state what I am supposed to be guilty of?" broke in the minister. "There's no use in beating about the bush. Let's get down to business."

"Wall, then, I see the minister kiss their hired girl in the yard back of his house when they was a hangin' out clo'es. There, that's b'isness, I hope," added Miss Sabrina, with a withering glance at the minister, whose face was a study to see in its mixture of surprise and amusement.

"That seems definite," he said. "Will you be so kind as to say when this happened?"

"Las' We'nsday, about 'leven o'clock, nigh 's I c'n recollect," replied Miss Sabrina. "I was a-goin' to Mis' Ho'cum's to do some sewin', an' jest as I got up to the passunidge I see what I've told of."

The minister looked at his wife, and a broad grin came over their faces.

"You are sure it was the hired girl that kissed?"

"Ef I wa'n't, I wouldn't say so," answered Miss Sabrina.

"But how did you know it?"

"Wall, by her clo'es an' her sunbunnit," replied the witness.

"Did you see her face?"

"No, I didn't," answered Miss Sabrina.

"Then isn't it just possible that you mig have been mistaken in the identity of the person?"

"Wall, p'r'aps I *might*," admitted Miss Sabrina, "but if I *had* ben, 't would ha' ben jest as bad, fer 's I c'n see, bein's Mis' Cooper wa'n't to home. If it hadn't ben the hired girl, 't would ha' been some other woman, 's long 's there was kissin' goin' on, wouldn't it?" This question of logic was aimed at the minister as unanswerable in the opinion of Miss Sabrina.

"How do you *know* my wife wasn't at home?"

"Because Mrs. Dopkins said she wa'n't," answered Miss Sabrina. "I stopped there to borry a polinay pattern fer Mis' Ho'cum', an' she said Mis' Cooper 'd gone over to her folks to stay till after Thanksgivin'."

"I didn't say any such thing," interrupted Mrs. Dopkins, "an' you know it, S'briny Peek. You told me you 'd heard the minister's wife was goin' to her folks, over to Woodville, Thanksgivin', an' I told you I hadn't heard anything about it, but I shouldn't wonder ef 'twas so, an' that she 'd gone, fer I see a wagin there Tuesday, an' noticed 'em puttin' the childern in it. *That's* what I said, an' you know it, an' it was *all* I said, an' you ain't a-goin' to wring me into the muss that way."

"I sh'd like to ask if Mis' Cooper *did* go away the day afore the kissin' bisness come off?" asked Deacon Bowers.

"No, I did *not!*" exclaimed Mrs. Cooper, springing to her feet, with amusement and indignation striving for mastery in her face. "My brother drove over after us Tuesday, but there was not room in the wagon for all of us, and as we had promised Melissa Jones a week off during the Thanksgiving season, as she wanted to visit her cousins at Woodville, we sent her and the children over, with my brother, on Tuesday, and he came back after my husband and myself Wednesday evening. There had been so much work to do, getting ready for the visit, that the washing had been neglected, and as I did not like to leave it until our return, I put on Melissa's dress and did my own washing on Wednesday, with my husband's help. We hung out the clothes together, and—I have to admit it!—he kissed me under the clothes-line, and I suppose Miss Peek saw him do it. That she saw him kiss somebody is true, but that's all she seems to be sure of."

Such a rustle of excitement as went over the congregation! Deacon Bowers tried not to laugh, but his sense of the ludicrous was too much for him, and he leaned back in his chair and shook his fat sides till his face was purple.

"How was *I* to know 'twa'n't the hired girl, I 'd like to know?" asked Miss Sabrina, showing an inclination to cry. "I 'd like to know how I was to think anything else, s'posin' Mis' Cooper was gone?"

"You could have waited until you *knew* before setting the story afloat," said the minister, gravely. "I think that my life among you has been such that I was entitled to your confidence as a man and a Christian, and you should have been positively sure before saying anything. The right way was to come to me about it before going to the community with it. That would have shown a Christian spirit, but this—"

"I won't set here to be accused o' not showin' a Christian sperrit!" exclaimed Miss Sabrina, pale with rage and discomfiture. "I ask fer a letter from this church. I *insist* on havin' it. I'll jine the Methodis'."

"I move that a letter be granted Sister S'briny Peek, dismissin' her from membership in this church," said Mr. Weaver, and some one seconded the motion promptly; the moderator put it, and it was carried with a rush that almost took Miss Sabrina's breath away, before the minister could interpose an objection to such an informal way of doing business.

The church-meeting broke up in an undignified "good time." There was much handshaking between the minister and his congregation, and many congratulations on the happy outcome.

"I ruther guess you 'd better be a leetle careful about kissin' your wife in broad daylight arter this," said Deacon Bowers, with a chuckle. "Ef you do, don't let her wear sunbunnits, an' be sure to have her face turned to'rd the road, so there can't be any mistake made by whoever happens to be goin' by."

The truth of the matter got to the Methodists, and they refused to take Miss Sabrina into membership until she had made a confession of hasty and unchristian conduct. This she refused to do. Consequently she is outside the pale of the churches, and occupies a position that makes her feel like a person at sea.

◆

## STREET DAIRIES.

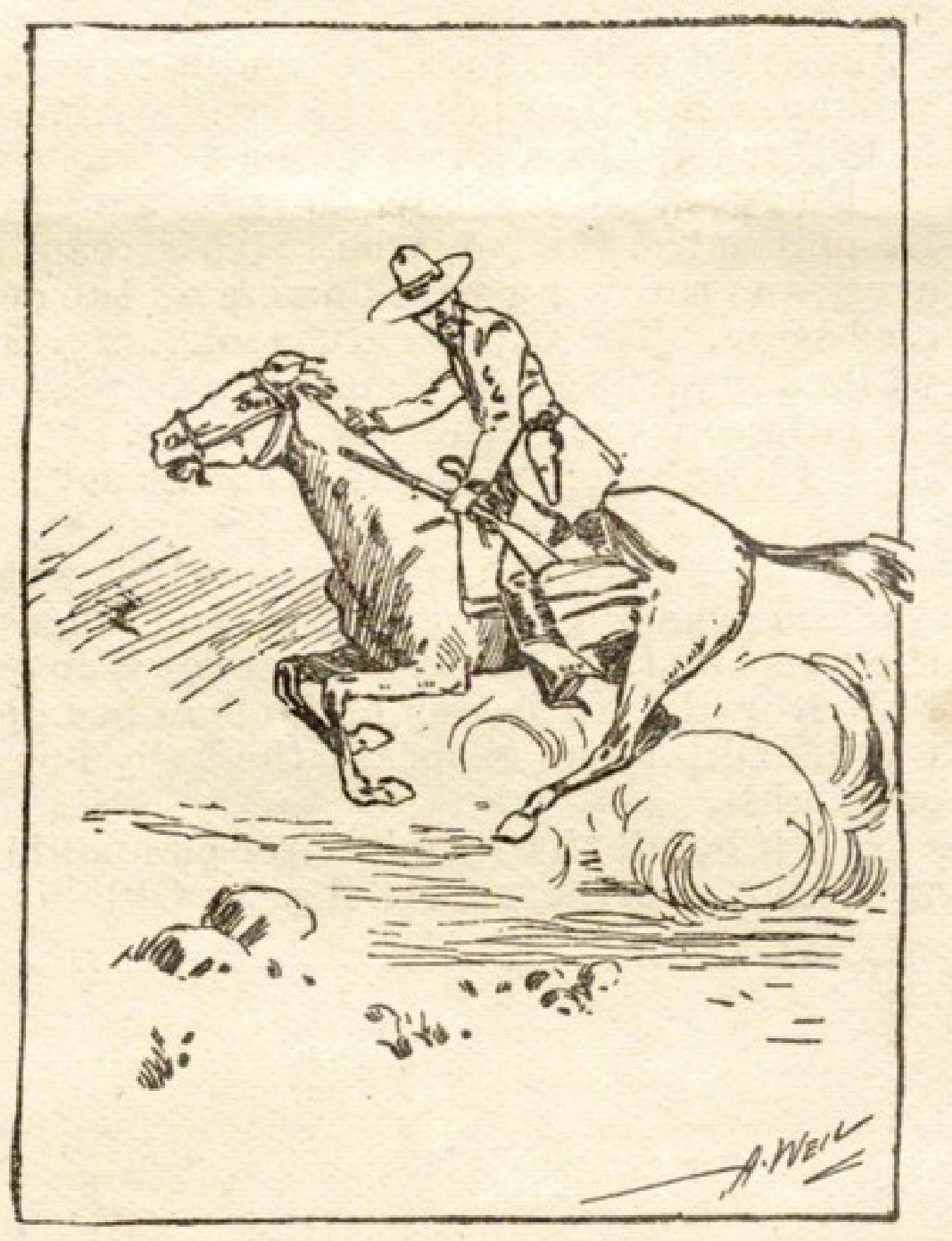
An oddity of Chili are the milk stations. Here and there in all but the principal business streets is a platform upon which a cow is tied, and milked to order by a dairymaid whenever a customer calls. On a table near by are found measures, cans, and glasses, and often a bottle of brandy, so that a thirsty man can mix a glass of punch if he likes. In the morning these stands are surrounded by servants from the principal houses, women and children, with cups and buckets, awaiting their turn, while as fast as one cow is exhausted, another is driven upon the platform.

# The Baby Boomer.[*]

### BY HERBERT D. WARD.

### CHAPTER I.

Tara-tara-ra-ra-ra-ra-ra! rang out the shrill tones of the bugle. As far as eye could reach from west to east, from woodland, bog and prairie, a nondescript, feverish, impatient mass of rushing humanity was seen, fully 20,000 strong. The hundreds of United States marshals and troops who had for so many days wearily guarded the coveted territory from trespass sighed with relief when the first notes of the preëmption signal were heard. Long before noon the thousands who had started for Arkansas City, who had camped at Ponca, at Black Bear Creek, who had pushed on cheerfully in spite of the swollen rivers, bottomless mud and all the woes incident to an invading army, were ranged along the wire fence that marked the Oklahoma line. Open wagons, prairie schooners, sulkies, buggies, carts pulled by donkeys, mules, oxen and horses of all kinds and every blood were stationed on the line. The great majority of the settlers had staked everything on Oklahoma, and many of these were seated on horses prepared to race for their future homes.



THE LAND SHARK TURNED.

On the dead line, next to a wagon which bore the following words on its canvas cover: "Chintz-Bugged in Illinois, Sicloned in Nebraska, Whitecapped in Indiana, Baldknobbed in Missoury, Prohibited in Kansas, Oklahomy or Bust," was a modest and neatly covered wagon. Though filled with a miscellaneous assortment of household utensils and farm implements, this wagon presented a curiously feminine appearance. Harnessed on one side of its pole was a hopelessly feeble nag that seemed inspired to pull or die. On the seat was a boy of eight winters. He was not humpbacked, though he gave that unfortunate impression; but the snows of life had somehow shriveled his little form, and he bent like a bow. He clung to the battered reins, while a look of determination was set upon his weazened face.

"Keep a cool head, Bub. After I've staked my claim and dug a spadeful of dirt and put up my shingle, Wee and I will ride back to meet you. No matter what happens, keep straight for the river."

The voice was strong and pleasant. It came from a woman on horseback—Bub's mother, who had mounted the nigh horse to make a surer race for land. In front of her Wee was safely tied, her baby girl, just three years old. Bub was too young and feeble to drive and care for his sister at the same time, so Wee went on horseback with the adventurous mother.

These three people were among the great army of immigrants who had staked all on the President's proclamation opening the new territory of Oklahoma to the public.

Tom Korall, the children's father, had died in the saddle booming somewhere in the Indian Territory, and Caddy Korall, his wife, was left in Kansas with the two children. It was in her blood to scramble for new land. Excitement and the hope of a quarter section were too strong; and now, mounted on Jerry, she saw land and home waiting for her on the banks of the Cimarron River.

The rustling now became a rushing and a shouting. Yells and shrieks quickened the hoofs of even the most decorous mule. The hour had come. Twelve o'clock was at hand. The bugle blew. At noon precisely, on Monday, April 22, began the desperate race, that all the world has heard of, for Oklahoma land. There was no time for good-byes now. Caddy wanted to kiss her boy again. She couldn't reach him. She kissed her hand instead, and galloped off. Bub urged his horse to the mockery of a trot. The land sharks who but now had made jokes at the boy's expense and tried to chaff the single-minded mother, were off and gone on their fleet bronchos—the Indian ponies. The day was bright and clear. The race could be seen for miles over the rolling prairie. Bub strained his eyes and kept the two flying figures on horseback in sight as long as he could see for tears and dust. He heard men swearing violently, and saw many brandish weapons. The untamed emotional natures of the boomers found vent in yelling "Yahoo! Yahoo!" at the top of their lungs, and in firing shots from revolvers and Winchesters. The mother fled, well in the van, among honest citizens and "prairie toughs," who meant to get land at any cost. I said that Caddy was well at the head? So she was. Jerry outdid himself on that day. Yet she was not the first. One, who had the bold eyes of a cosmopolitan belle, the assurance of a Texan cowboy, and who kept her saddle like a circus rider, was full a quarter of a mile ahead. She led the race on a magnificent roan. She turned and challenged them all with a laugh and with gestures of defiance. Though she smiled insolently at the men, she looked sympathetically at the pale, slight mother who, with one arm around the child and with the reins in the other hand, urged Jerry by sharp clucks. Close behind Caddy rode the leader of the notorious gang of desperadoes who had done so much to fleece and terrorize the farmer boomers. This man went by the name of "Grizzly Jim." The pace was terrific. The three had turned more to the eastward away from the railroad. Grizzly Jim began to gain on Caddy. For fully eight miles they had run nip and tuck. The desperado could not overtake the leading girl. In his anger the blood surged into his eyes and blinded him. Caddy was not ten rods ahead of him in a direct line. He raised his Winchester, took rapid aim and blazed away. At which of the two had he fired? Alas! which had he hit? Caddy's right arm fell helpless. Jerry gave a desperate plunge in fright. The woman swayed, a faintness seized her, and she fell. With an oath, the brute passed her where she lay. Jerry, conscious of a lighter weight, raced onward with the renewed speed.

Now, the bold rider of the yellow hair heard the shot. She looked around and took in the whole scene with her quick eyes. With difficulty she reined her wild horse and tried to intercept the baby's perilous ride. She set her teeth. The wildness of her nature wrestled with the womanly. This was her hour of glory—that she, a girl, should beat thousands of men in the struggle for land. What would she not do to stake the first section on the northern banks of the Cimarron River? She could see the sardonic and cruel smile of Grizzly Jim as he gained upon her in mighty bounds. But behind lay one of her own sex, helpless, perhaps dying.

"I guess I'll have to give it up." The girl turned once more to the southward toward the promised land, and then the adventuress in her yielded to the woman. She rode bravely back to where the heap of mortality lay close beside a scraggly tuft of sage bushes.

"Oh, you ruffian!" She shook her fist in the astonished Jim's face as she passed him like a flash of yellow light. The land shark turned and saw her tenderly lift the fallen woman's head upon her lap and kiss the tremulous lips.

"Well, I'll be stewed! I didn't think she had it in her; she 's no slouch, you bet!" with that semi-colon of admiration he spurred his hard-breathing pony for the home stretch.

Of all the fertile spots in the Cimarron valley, this was the greenest. So, at least, a jaded horse thought as he cropped the tender grass and pawed joyfully in the dark loam. He was saddled: from a distance a spade could be easily distinguished secured lengthways along his side. A queer bundle seemed to dance in the saddle, and one might almost swear that tiny hands clutched the mane from time to time.

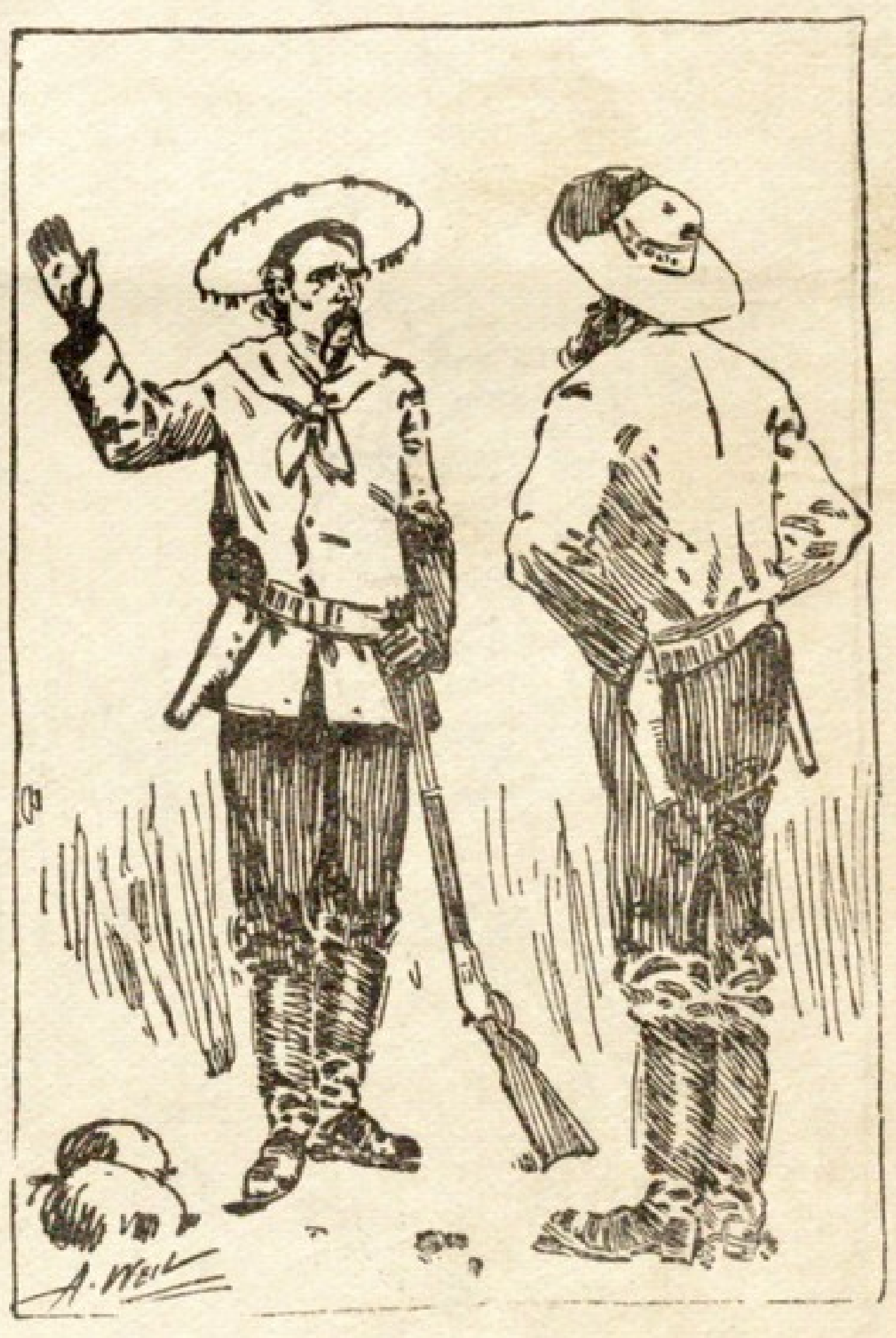
And now from behind a large stump appeared a head. It had on it a broad-brimmed, mouse-colored sombrero, embroidered about the edge, with silk cords dangling from the sides. A fierce, scowling face peered down into that quiet valley. The eyes scanned it and then rested on the peaceful horse. One hand nervously twirled a coarse black mustache, while the other played with the trigger of a gun. Wonder was expressed in every feature, from the arch above the eyebrows to the mouth, which puckered itself into a silent whistle. The mouth did not look cruel now. It is strange how the lines of tenderness and cruelty cross each other, and how in some faces there is implacable feud between the two.

"Umph! If any sojer or gov'nment cuss hez got ahead o' me, I'll hev the drop on him ez sure ez he 's a born critter." Presently the look of wonder increased to a curious astonishment. "If it hain't the bebby! No use for this," he tapped a modern repeating rifle, "to git the land, you bet."

Grizzly Jim stood face to face with Wee, the baby boomer. The child's big violet eyes looked confidingly upon that reprobate.

"Di' me dink o' watah." The tiny face puckered as if it were going to cry, then controlled itself bravely. "Where 's mummer?"

For the first time the thought of that dastardly shot crossed Grizzly Jim's mind. He was so used to deeds of violence that they did not easily prick his leather conscience. What could he do before a baby? Bravado was useless. He looked into the trusting face of the three-year-old girl. Then he did the only thing he could. He took from his holster a tin canteen, went to the brook and returned.



"I SHALL STAY HERE WITH THE BABY, SO HELP ME."

"Tank oo," cooed the baby. Then after a short pause, during which a hundred expressions indicating indecision passed and repassed the man's dark face, the child went on:

"Take me down; I'se tired."

The strong hand tenderly unstrapped the baby girl and he took her in his arms to set her on the ground; but she clung to his neck.

"You 'se a goody man; tiss me."

Why was it that Grizzly Jim unconsciously ejected the cud of tobacco from his mouth and wiped his stained lips upon his sleeve and blushed—yes, blushed—before he touched Wee's peach-like cheek?

"I 'se so tired—Jerry jiggled me. Where 's mummer? I t'ink I do to sleep." And there and then Wee laid her curly head upon the rough corduroy shoulder and went to sleep, as if upon her mother's breast.

"Wall, Jim, you 're euchered this trip, an' no mistake. I wonder whar the boys be?" muttered the man, as he carefully sat down upon a stone. He looked at the sleeping child in his arms. In his belt were two pistols and a bowie-knife. At his feet was a rifle. Yet never had he been so disarmed since—since a baby of his own had nestled there—oh, so many years ago. What a wild night that was, when he had kicked his sick wife senseless, for throwing the whisky out of the window; had given his wife one last, hasty kiss, and had ridden away, never to return. Afterward he read in a paper that the baby died in a week. It was twenty years since he had held a baby, and all that time he had never received from any creature a touch of confidence or love.

"I couldn't hev killed this critter's mammy; I never aimed on her." He consoled himself with that thought. At this moment hoofs were heard in the distance. "The bebby shall hev her claim if I hev to stake it with my life," whispered Grizzly Jim. He laid the child down cautiously upon the grass. He ran for the spade and dug into

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the rich soil with quick energy. Shouts were now heard: "Yahoo! Yahoo!" They came nearer.

## CHAPTER II.

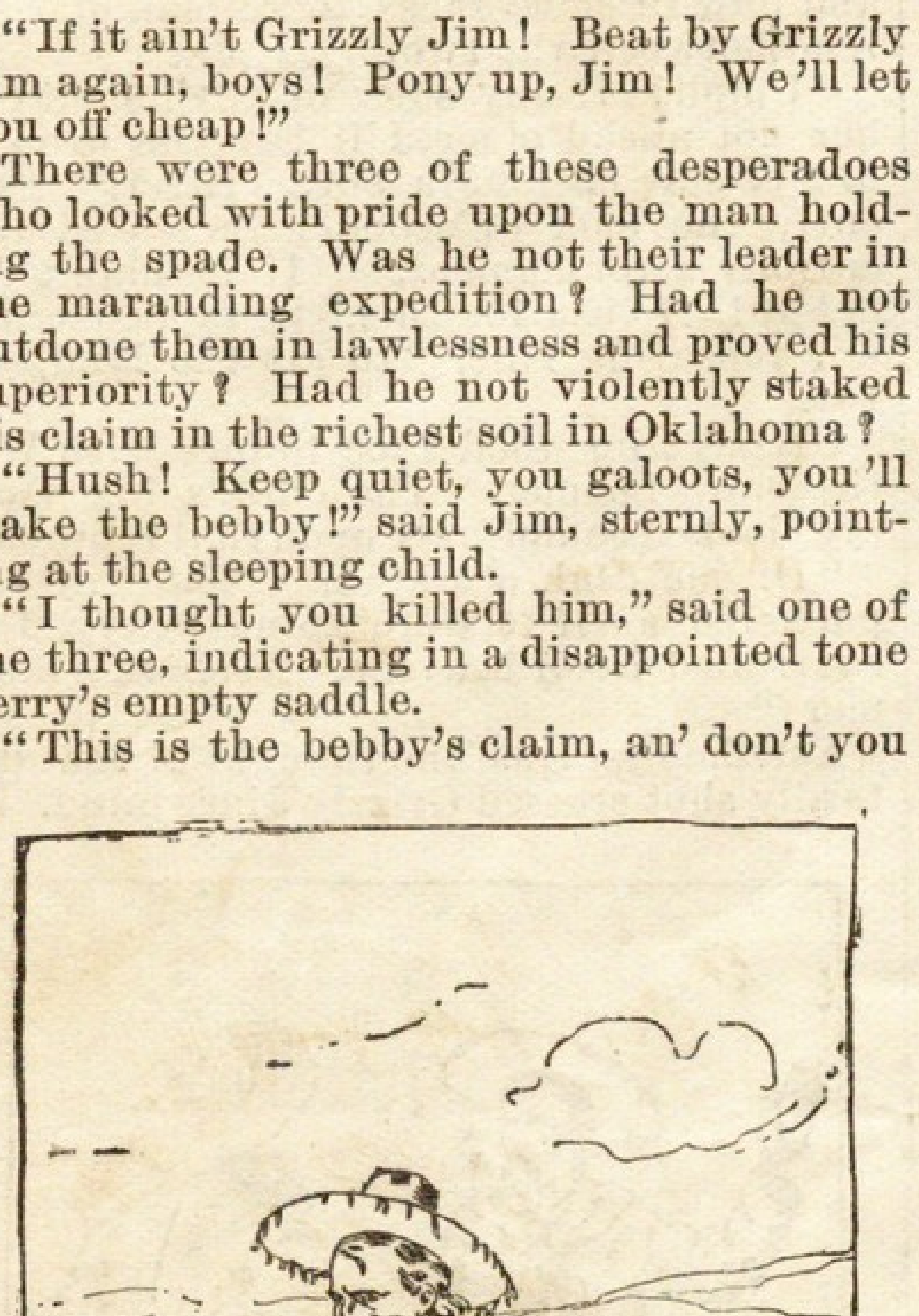
"If it ain't Grizzly Jim! Beat by Grizzly Jim again, boys! Pony up, Jim! We'll let you off cheap!"

There were three of these desperadoes who looked with pride upon the man holding the spade. Was he not their leader in the marauding expedition? Had he not outdone them in lawlessness and proved his superiority? Had he not violently staked his claim in the richest soil in Oklahoma?

"Hush! Keep quiet, you galoots, you'll wake the bebby!" said Jim, sternly, pointing at the sleeping child.

"I thought you killed him," said one of the three, indicating in a disappointed tone Jerry's empty saddle.

"This is the bebby's claim, an' don't you forgit it, and the first feller that tries to jump it, I'll jump on him like a catamount. You know me—an' this boy, too."



HE LOOKED AT THE SLEEPING CHILD IN HIS ARMS.

So said Grizzly Jim, patting his belt with the security of one who could split a bullet with a knife blade fifty yards. The three retired to consult. Presently one returned and said in a whisper, after a warning gesture from Jim:

"Be'an you a-going to stay here?"

"You bet."

"How long?"

"Till the bebby hez her claim fer sure—perhaps aluz."

"D'ye mean it, Grizzly Jim? An yer pockets could bulge in three days wid the tin them fools are bringin' in?"

"You fellers kin go on—an' go to bust—I shall stay here with the bebby, so help me—"

Jim's face turned toward the baby, and then, for the first time since he could remember, he pronounced with reverence the awful name of God.

The three watched him as he stood firmly beside the child. His rifle was in his hand. His word was as good as his aim. Everybody knew that. The baffled men murmured and made a scanty show of disrespect. Their old leader's strange freak and stern face disconcerted them, and soon enough they grumblingly rode out of the valley to some other plundering ground. Then Jim heaved a mighty sigh; his mouth twitched; he leaned over his charge. "Fur yer mammy's sake—an' my own bebby's sake—so help me God." Then he reverently kissed the child.

* * * * * *

True to his mother's directions, Bub kept straight for the river. The child had not gone four miles before he saw a sight which was not infrequent in that lawless territory, where over thirty thousand boomers were struggling for less than eleven thousand homesteads. Among this throng were those who were some of the old original boomers, who knew Oklahoma as well as you do your garden. When these find any "tenderfoot" or newcomer ahead of them, they treat him as a trespasser upon their own property. One of this class, who considered any part of the opened territory as his own original inheritance, had come across a young fellow of twenty, occupying a fine bit of prairie which he had rightfully preëmpted. He had dug his dirt, and now, with the satisfaction of a hard duty accomplished, was firing his pistol frantically in the air in true boomer style. The border ruffian had ridden up, and, with oaths that he considered suitable to the occasion, had ordered the young man off in two minutes. The youthful boomer hurried to load, but a bullet in his brain ended his career. Now, this was observed by many, and Bub saw it with horror, and with greater terror noticed that the deed excited no remark. It seemed quite natural, in this dreadful place, to kill any one who tried to protect his property. The child thought of his mother. She must be safe upon her claim by this time. Besides, she was a woman, and who could touch a woman?

He drove on slowly two or three miles, when the man in the wagon that bore the inscription "Oklahomy or bust" rode up beside him, and said:

"They say a woman has been shot up there," pointing to the left. "Some cuss headed her off with his gun when she was goin' to stake her claim. There is plenty of fire-eaters about this day. They had quite as lief plug one ez not. You had better take keer."

With this friendly advice, the man rode rapidly away. Where does the news of disaster obtain its winged feet? Bub never stopped to wonder at the accuracy of the statement, but turned to the left, and, with fluttering heart, urged his jaded horse to a trot. Soon he got out and led it, running at its head. He thought he saw a woman's dress in a clump of sage bushes about half a mile ahead. Then he saw, beyond, a man heading for the same spot, leading a riderless horse. Yes. it was Jerry. The boy uttered a low moan, crying, "Mamma! Mamma!" He let go the bridle and flew as fast as his thin legs would allow him, over brake and stone, until he sank exhausted on the sod beside a pale, slight woman, wounded unto death.

Bub's heroic little soul took in the situation as far as it was able, with a manly self-restraint beyond his years. The sick child had suffered so much himself that he knew by instinct how not to add to the suffering of another. He did not cry out nor make a fuss nor startle the mangled woman with his grief. He only put his thin cheek down close to hers and patted her two or three times.

"Poor mamma!" he said. "Dear mamma! you got hurt, haven't you? Never mind: Bub's here. I'll take care of you. Shall I get the quinine?" said Bub, gulping down the tears. Receiving no answer but the groans of the dying woman, the child said: "Perhaps you'd rather have the mustard plaster? I think I know where the blue pills are," added Bub; "they're under the seat of the wagon somewheres."

But a power greater than quinine and blue mass (the main constituents of the boomer's *materia medica*) defied the little nurse. His mother's gaunt blue eyes regarded him solemnly. Death looked out of them. A woman's protest against the fate of her motherless babes gathered like an army in her nature and fought for life.

"Poor Bub!" she moaned. "My little Bub! My sick boy! And oh, my baby! Where is my baby? Where is Wee?"

"Here she is, marm."

A big, bass voice, shaken with emotion as new to the desperado as the baby's delicate kiss upon his coarse cheeks, interrupted the piteous scene. Grizzly Jim stood there, Jerry panting behind him; Wee, the baby, cuddled trustfully against his blood-stained heart.

"You!" cried a sharp, young voice suddenly. It was the girl with the yellow hair—the adventuress, who had abandoned the choicest claim in Oklahoma for another woman's sake. She glanced at Grizzly Jim with scorn. "I only went to get water for her," said the girl in a matter-of-fact tone, restraining herself powerfully. "I only left her for a minute. Here, you poor thing! Drink if you can. I'll hold you. Come, my little lad," gently to the crippled boy, "let me help. I'm stronger than you. I won't hurt her. She needs a woman—a woman does, when it comes to dying."

At this juncture the baby-girl began to laugh and pat her pink hands, opening and shutting her little fingers rapidly with delight.

"Mummer!" cried Wee. "Mummer! Dee mummer!"

"Lord have mercy on me!" wailed the dying woman. "Two of 'em babies—left in this awful place! Why, I can't die! I won't die!"

Grizzly Jim advanced suddenly. He removed the soiled sombrero from his shaggy head. He sank upon one muddy knee before poor Caddy.

"Marm," he said bluntly, "I shot at ye. I own to 't. I meant to hit another woman. I missed my dog-goned aim for the fust time in twenty year."

A slight smile crossed the lips of the yellow-haired girl who held the dying woman's head upon her broad, strong breast; but she didn't look up nor answer Grizzly Jim. After an instant's silence, she said in a low voice:

"You've got the floor, you, sir. Keep it. Drive ahead. She won't hold out many minutes."

"All I've got to say, marm, is this here," pursued Jim, unsteadily. "I've done the mischief, and I'll bide the consequence. Yer horse an' yer babby got yer claim, an' I staked it fur 'em, an' by Heaven above us, marm, I'll keep it, an' the young ones, too."

The anguish of the dying woman's face wrenched this great resolve from the depth of that new tumult in Jim's soul which we call repentance.

"Goody man!" gurgled Wee, going over to him with a lolling, curving motion, like a kitten at play with a light string. "Goody man, div Wee drink o' watah. Mummer! Dee, dee mummer!"

The woman's stiffening lips set themselves into one word only:

"Pray—pray!"

Grizzly Jim looked at the strong girl. The girl looked at Grizzly Jim.

"I can't," she faltered. "I've forgotten how."

"I darsn't," he muttered. "I dun know how."

"I do," said Bub. "Mamma taught me."

The boy folded his thin hands, grimy with tears, and in a shrilly quavering voice began:

"Now I lay me down to sleep—"

At this moment the baby laughed outright, lurching over. In the ringing of that little laugh, poor Caddy's soul passed on. She smiled as she died—and so died most quietly.

The adventuress covered the dead matron's face; she did not speak. The baby girl curled against Jim's breast, and put up her fingers and began to play "Danbury Cross" on his cheek. Jim bowed his bared head over Wee, so low that it was impossible to see his eyes. Only Bub cried, and he made no noise about it, but wailed in a low monotone, enough to break one's heart.

"I forgive you for drawing a bead on me if you'll be a daddy to the young ones. You took it so powerful hard, I won't tell the soldiers on you. I meant to," said the yellow-haired girl, softly, after a few minutes' pause. "My claim is staked here. You keep your distance, and if you want the baby tended and the boy mended up, I'll do it for you."

Jim tried to smile at the rough, generous woman, who, after all, was so like himself in better impulses.

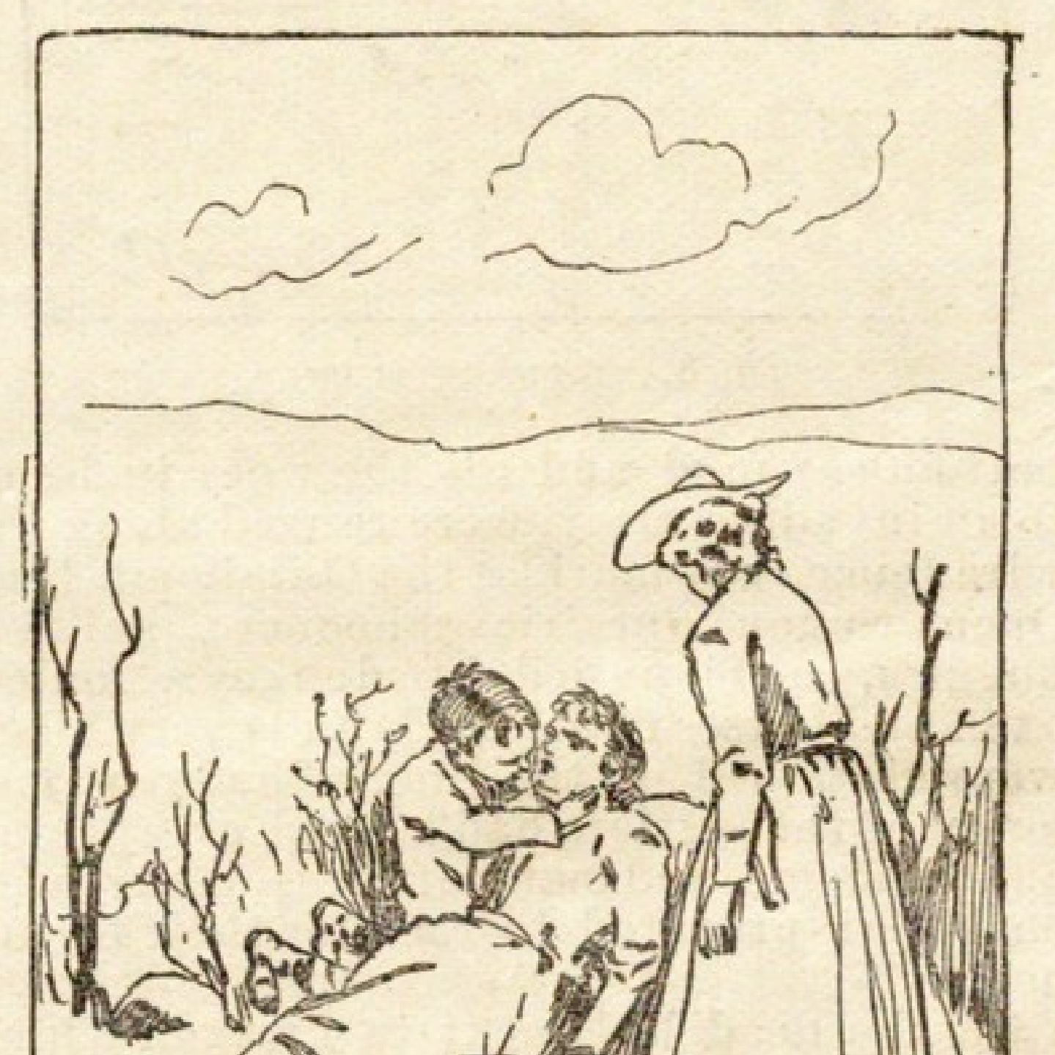
"Do yer think the boy 'ud trust me too?" He pointed at the lad, who, with streaming eyes, was throwing wild flowers on the covered body. The feeble child looked up. He walked manfully to his mother's murderer.

"I dunno," said the boy, slowly. "I'll try. I hain't got anybody else," he sobbed.

* * * * * *

Strange to say, Grizzly Jim kept his word. A claim was duly filed at the land office in the name of Jim Coster, in trust for Wee and Bub Korall. No better claim has been entered. Oklahoma respects the baby boomer's rights.

Now it befell that Jim's three companions were shot for theft next day in Oklahoma by a vigilance committee, and Jim pondered much upon this fact when he heard it.



"DEAR MAMMA! YOU GOT HURT, HAVEN'T YOU?"

"I'd hev been four," he muttered. "The bebby saved me."

The dark deed he did, and the shame of it, proved his angels. In wild lives like his this sometimes happens, and in justice to our border life be it said that such transformations always command the reverence they deserve.

It was not past midsummer, yet a rude cabin, plastered with mud, had risen in "Wee Valley." A baby-girl plays at the door. A sad-eyed, sickly boy watches her as he cuts seed potatoes for Jim, their guardian, to plant. Both children look well fed and are well dressed. Wee is scrupulously clean, and Bub is conscientiously mended.

When the new schoolhouse opened in the fall, Bub and Wee formed the primary class, and it is rumored that Grizzly Jim has partially consented to be superintendent of the Sunday school where the yellow-haired girl plays the melodeon.

THE END.

◆

—A new sea anchor has been invented by Michael McCarthy, of Middletown, Conn. The anchor is filled with oil in such a way that the oil is diffused over the waves as the anchor is tossed up and down, and so a comparative calm is created, in which the vessel may ride out a storm in safety.

## KEEPING IN HEALTH.

We are told the future physician's work will principally consist in telling people how to keep well.

A mother whose several small children have escaped attacks of infectious and contagious diseases, argues:

"I need not wait for the future physician's lecture, which will prove a help to families scourged by frequent illness. I may begin now endeavoring to learn how to prevent illness."

The most careful mother has a difficult task in the endeavor to make a sunless house a happy or healthy home. In our cities there are rows of houses situated in the residence portion of the city crowded close up together. The only good, lighted rooms are in the front and rear of the building.

The woman whose home is dark, damp, surrounded by evils, disease-inviting, may understand the causes producing suffering and disease in her own household. She will in many instances be unable to secure good light, water, drainage and the various causes which affect health.

The woman who is about to purchase a home may investigate the building's interior, the surroundings, and not the architecture. Better search long and thoroughly for a well-lighted, clean house than get a bargain with a drawback. Ornamental architecture pleases the eye. The lover of beauty may incline to sacrifice a homely, necessary quality to outside ornamentation.

The person desiring to keep well must give heed to the home. The air will either be disease-inviting or health-giving. Keeping well involves favorable surroundings. The elegant palaces have not always within their walls the pure air, lights and proper aids to health.

◆

## CAUSES OF HEADACHE.

The common headache of everyday life is the one we desire to call attention to. We think we are safe in saying that all simple acute headaches are caused by indigestion, which is produced by the use of inferior food or an inability to use good food. Also almost all chronic headaches are caused by dyspepsia, constipation and disorders of the liver, and these troubles are very closely related. Constipation is always associated with dyspepsia. The liver, the greatest depurating organ of the body, is obstructed and diseased in cases of dyspepsia. So it ought to be understood by all who wish to be informed on the subject that the stomach, bowels and liver belong to the digestive system, and that one cannot be diseased without more or less involving the others. These are the blood-making organs. About one-sixth of the blood of the body circulates in the head, and when this blood is loaded with impurities and improperly elaborated, then the brain and its structures are irritated and painful. This is called headache. The depurating organs—the bowels, liver, skin, kidneys and lungs—have failed to carry out the waste of the system from some cause. There has been too little exercise, sitting or working in illy-ventilated rooms, too little or poor quality of food, or partaking of too much wholesome food—over-eating. Over-excitement in business or sad and depressing news are among the common causes of disturbances in the system that result in headache.

◆

## THE MANUFACTURE OF TACKS.

"Where do the pins go to?" is a common saying, but when one takes a few notes of the tack industry, the question "where do all the tacks go to?" seems to be the next thing in order.

The first tacks were made by hand. The operator used a vise and dies. A bit of metal was held with a clamp, and the head was made by striking a blow with a hammer. Later on machinery began to be used, and now metal is fed into an enormous apparatus that will cut out nearly three hundred tacks a minute. The processes are extremely interesting, and a tack factory has many visitors. The machinery is automatic; narrow strips of metal are fed in and clipped off, the heads are made by pressure, and it literally rains tacks into large boxes placed underneath to receive them. They are then poured into a rattler, which is a rapidly revolving cylinder, through which a jet of air is forced under high pressure. This removes all of the dust and loose particles. Black lead is sometimes put in to give them a polish, and then they pass on to the sifter, which sorts them and takes out the imperfect tacks, leaving the good ones to be passed

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on and dropped into a box, from which they are taken to be packed by quick-fingered girls. A good workwoman can pack sixteen hundred pounds of tacks in a day. When one realizes that many of these machines are going, and that tacks at this rate are being sent out to market, the wonder grows—where all the tacks go to.

◆

### LEFT AND RIGHT LIMBS.

The physiologists and scientists in general have been making some curious experiments with a view to determine the relative length and strength of "right" and "left" limbs. Fifty and nine-tenths per cent. of the men measured had the right arm stronger than the left; 16.4 per cent. had the two arms of equal length and strength, and 32.7 per cent. had the left arm stronger than the right. Of women, 46.9 per cent. had the right arm stronger than the left; 24.5 per cent. had the left stronger than the right. In order to arrive at the average length of limbs fifty skeletons were measured—twenty-five of each sex. Of these, twenty-three had the right arm and left leg longer; six the left arm and right leg, while in seventeen cases all the members were more or less equal in length.

◆

—Those who use Dobbins' Electric Soap each week *(and their name is legion)* save their clothes and strength, and let the *soap* do the work. Did *you* ever try it? If not, *do so* next Monday *sure*. Ask your grocer for it. —*a.*

◆

### DAMAGE BY ELECTRIC WIRE.

The warnings about the damage caused by electric wires running through trees came none too soon. Not long since an arc-light wire, by reason of the high wind, wore the insulator so that the electricity set fire to the tree. For a time there was considerable alarm and danger that houses might take fire. The fire department was called out, and, with the assistance of the police, a conflagration was averted. It would be well, in view of this situation, for all persons who have any interest in electric wires to keep constant watch of them, in order that they do not wear on branches of trees, which are continually swayed to and fro by the wind.

◆

—"Mr. Sparkle, what kind of a watch have you got that is suitable to send to my daughter, who is in boarding school? I don't want to pay more than $6.00." "I have the very thing at that very figure. The 'Addison' watch, in this nicely engraved sterling silver case; and here is a place for a monogram, if you will put a dollar more to your purchase. It is made by the Waterbury Watch Co., Waterbury, Conn., which is the only company in the world that makes and sells a watch complete."—*a.*

◆

### FREE TO BALD HEADS.

The Altenheim Medical Dispensary, Room 103, Selves Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, will mail on application free information regarding how to grow hair, stop falling hair and remove scalp diseases. Send at once. —*a.*

◆

### SHAVING BY MACHINERY.

Shaving a man in twenty-five seconds is a feat deserving of the highest praise and reward by all such as value their time. The feat has been rendered easy of performance by the construction of a shaving machine of wood, reported to have been made by one Melchoir Farkas, a convict in the penitentiary of the city of Szegedin, in Hungary. Farkas was put to labor in the cabinet-making shop of the prison, and, taking to his work with a will, he soon displayed great inventive ingenuity. With his machine he is said to have shaved all the inmates of the prison, nearly one hundred and fifty in number, within less than an hour's time. The report fails to state, however, to what extent the shaving by machinery did or did not succeed in giving comfort to the sufferer in the chair.

◆

### WATCH AND CLOCK REPAIRING TAUGHT FREE.

That pleasant and profitable employment is fully explained in the Manual issued by the Hofman Supply Co., of Columbus, O. It tells all the secrets, the tools necessary, how to use them, in short, gives a complete course of instruction, all one need in order to become an expert watch and clock repairer. This book will be mailed free to any one. Address the Hofman Supply Co., 269 Ray Street, Columbus, O. —*a.*

◆

—Send 10 cents to-day to Swanson Cure Co., 167 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., for *free* sample of the wonderful 5 *Drop* remedy. See advertisement on this page. —*a.*

◆

—President Crespo, of Venezuela, recently instructed his New York agent to purchase for use in his family "two of the finest bicycles made in this country," to quote the President's letter. On the steamer which sailed from New York, January 13th, for South America, were two Monarchs, Model 40, in fulfillment of the above order. —*a.*

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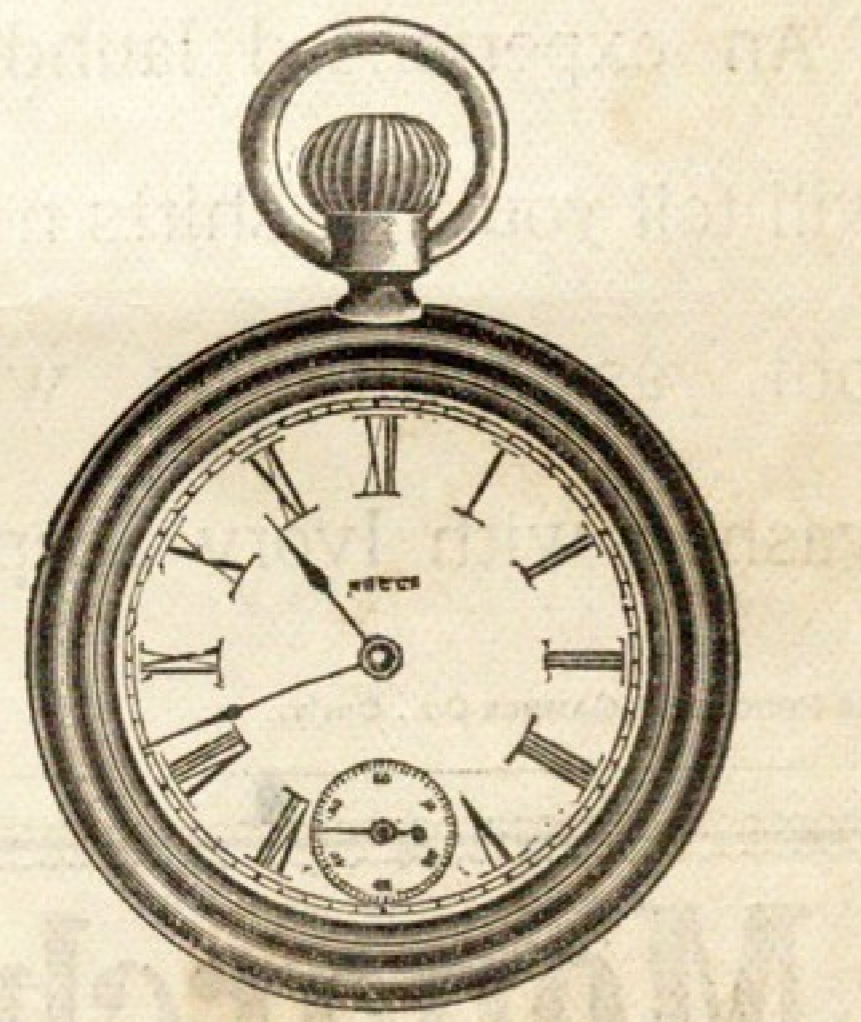

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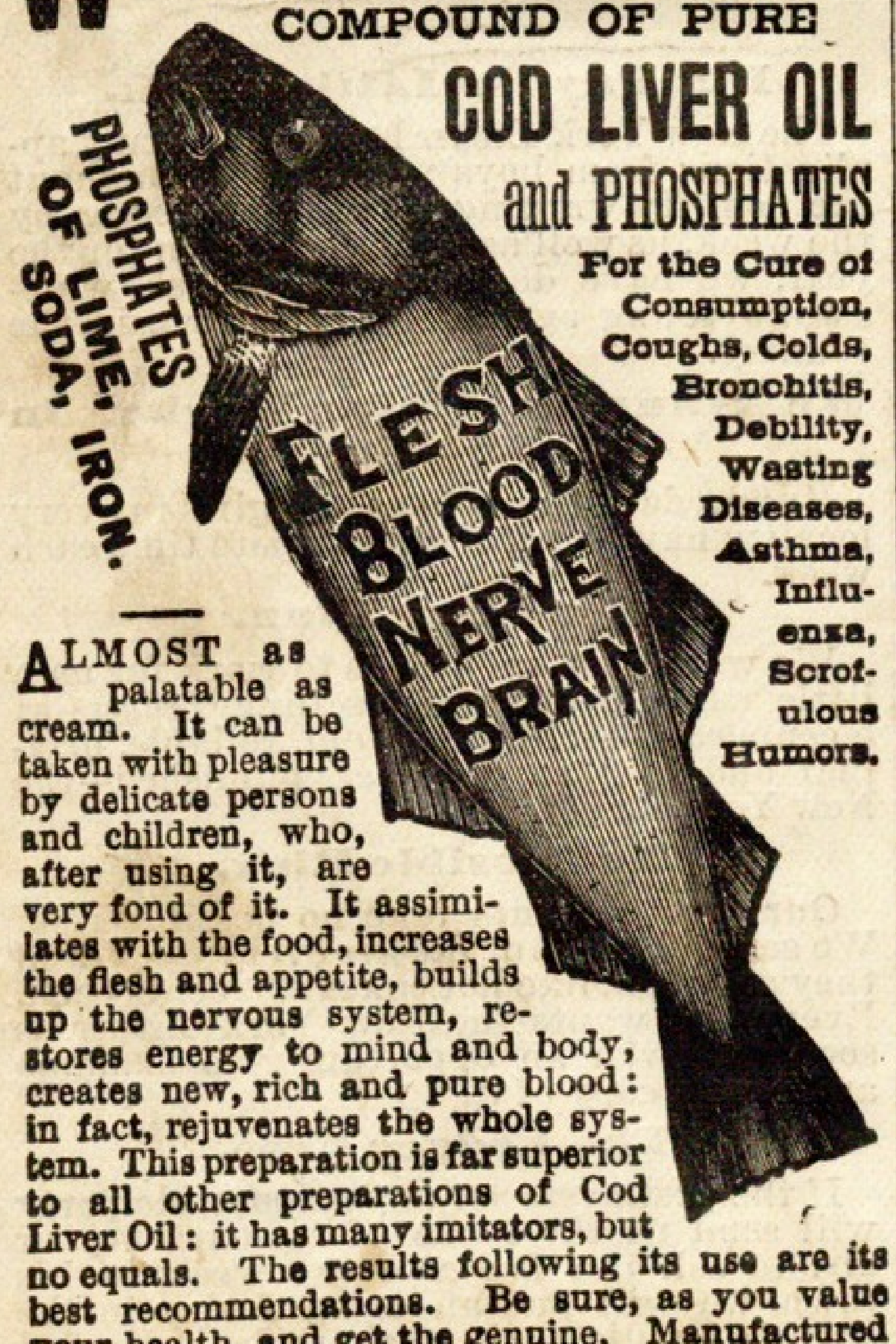
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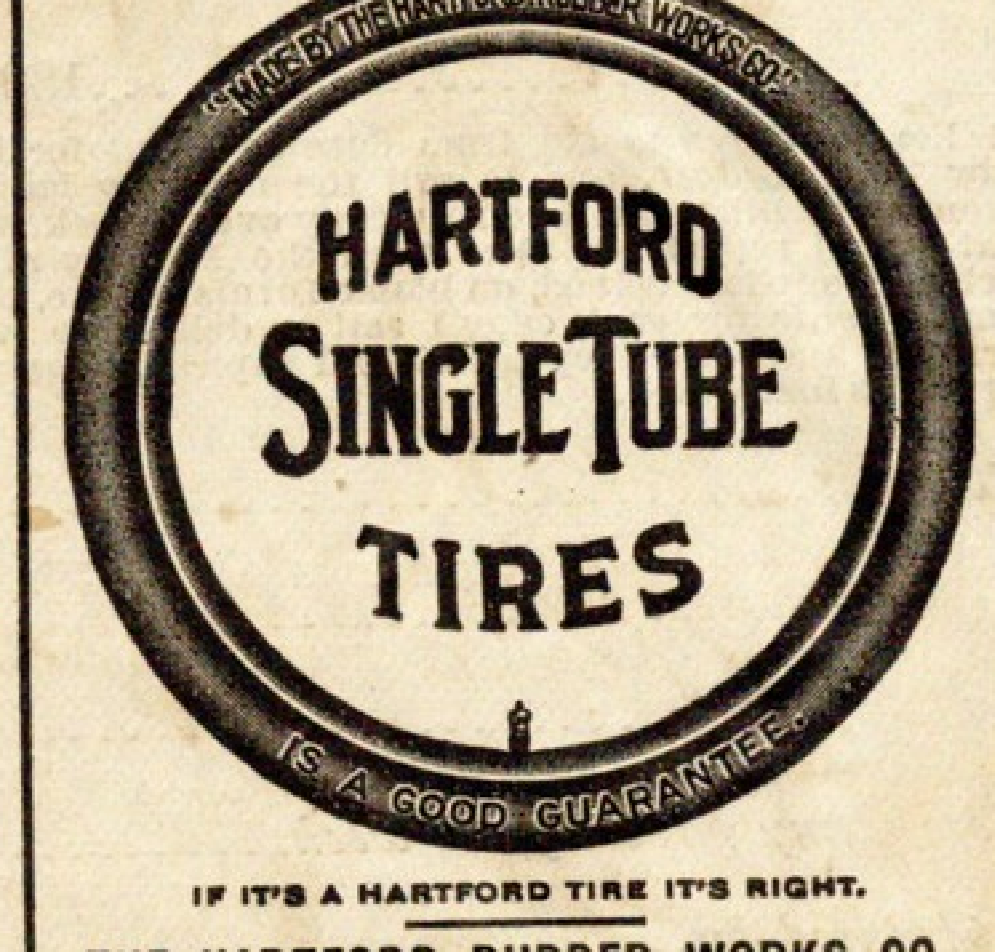

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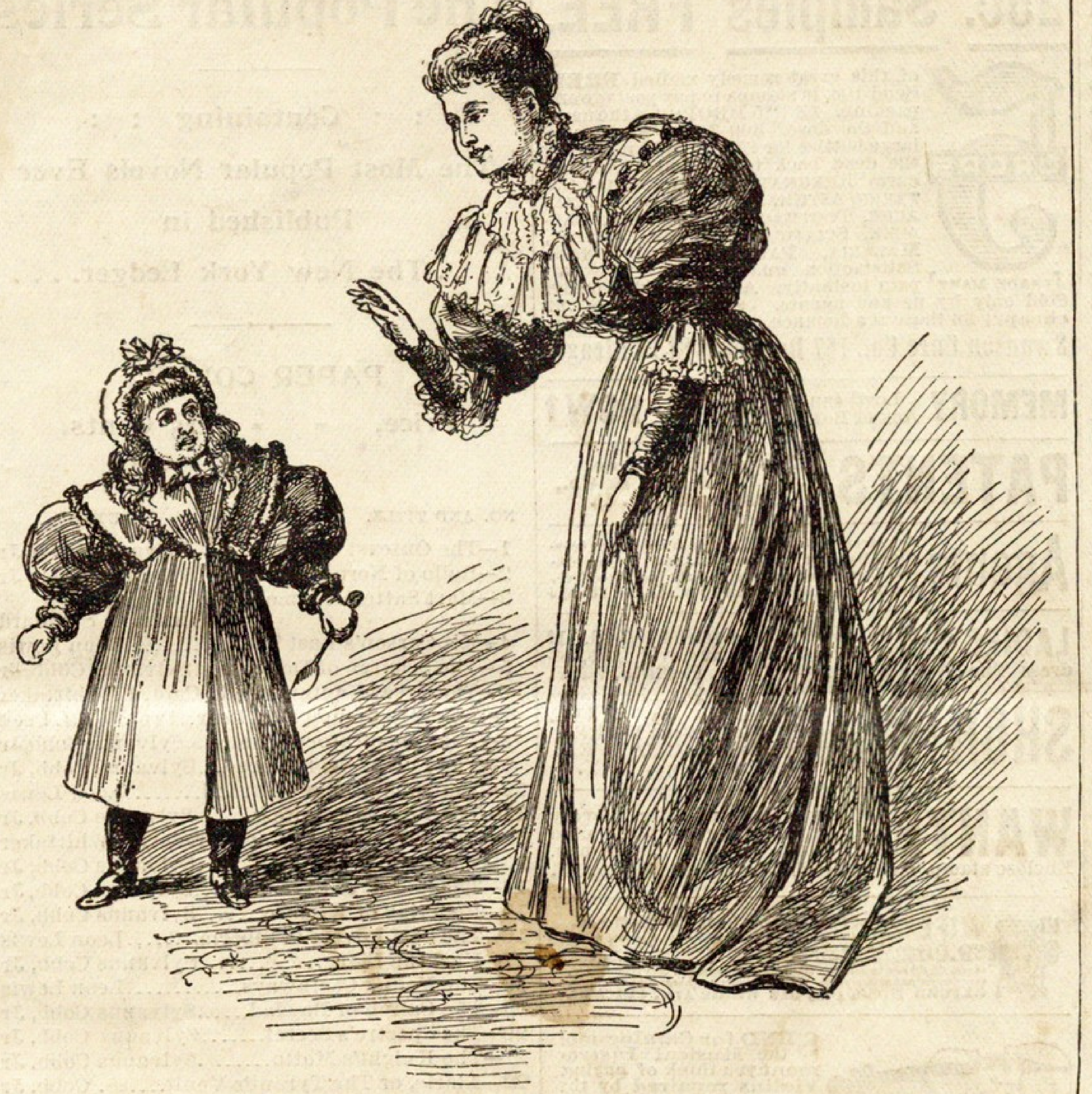

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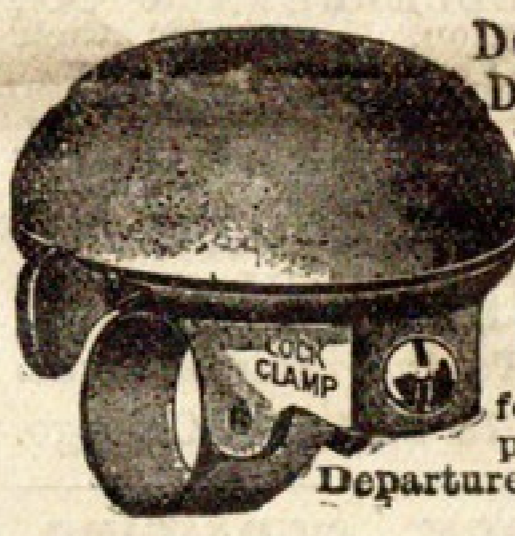

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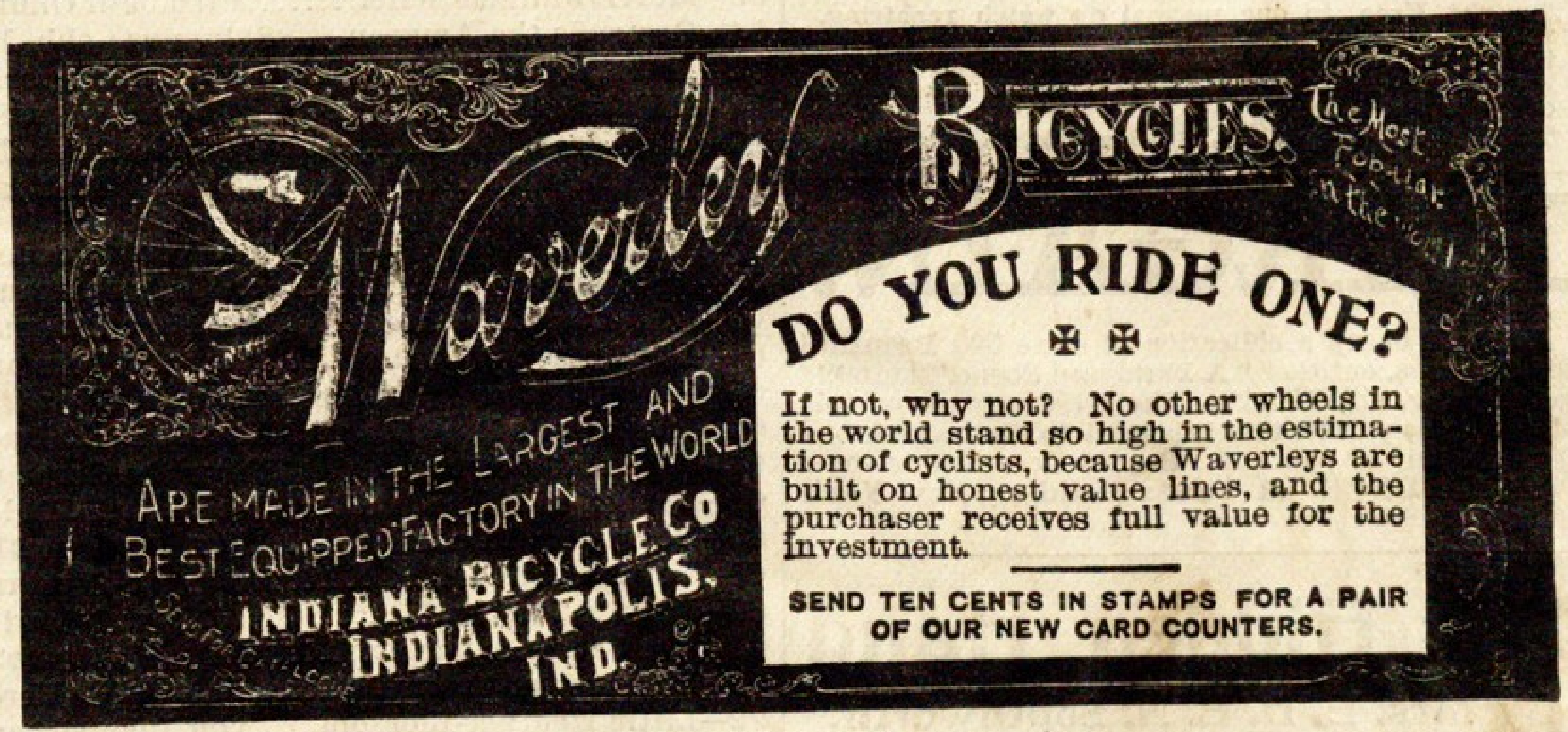
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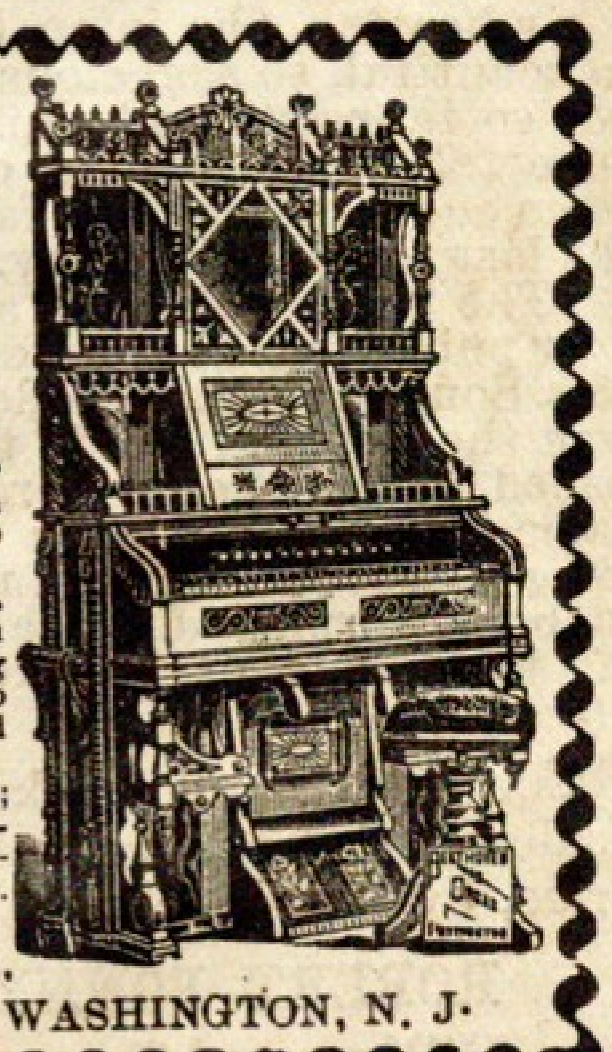

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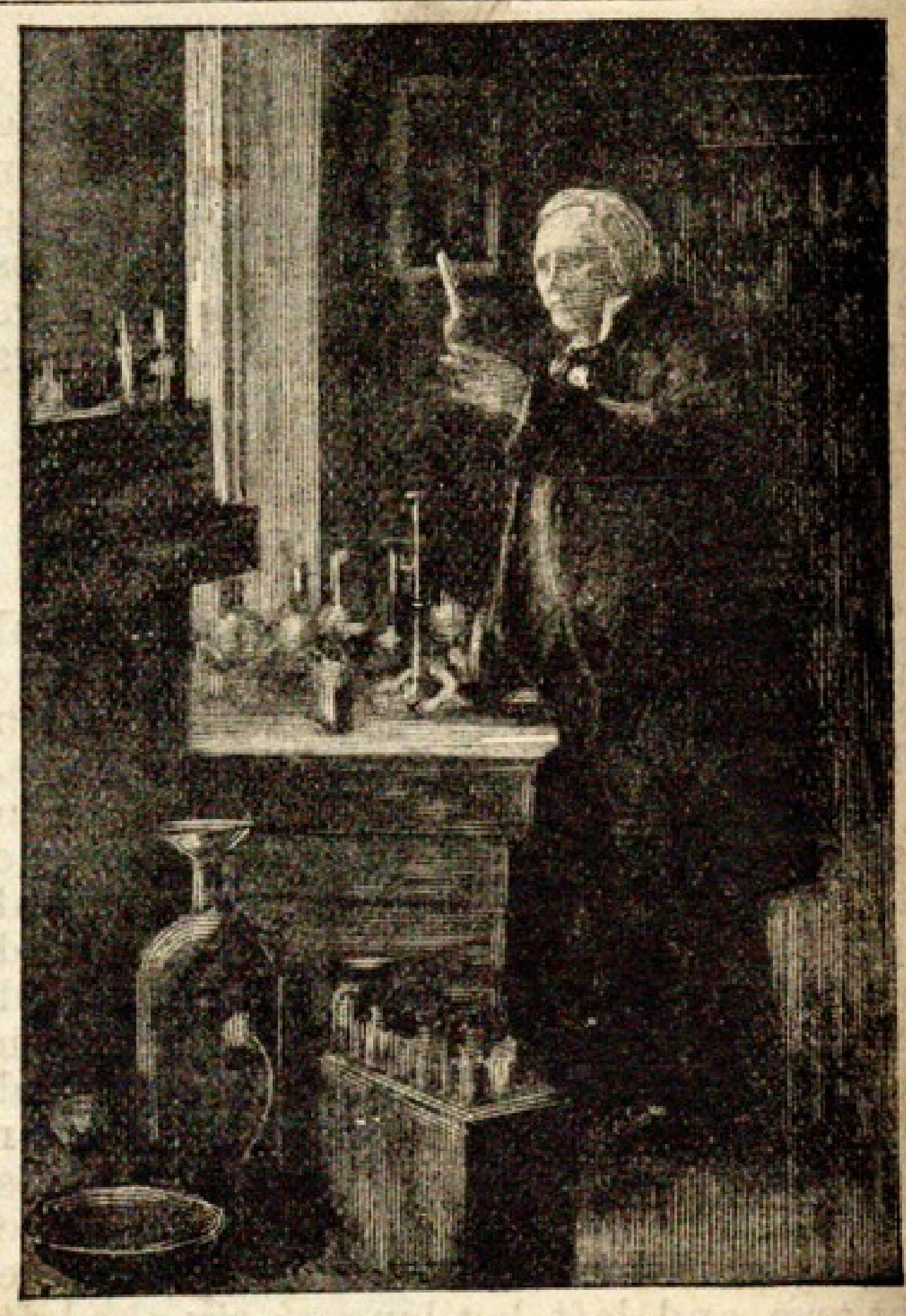

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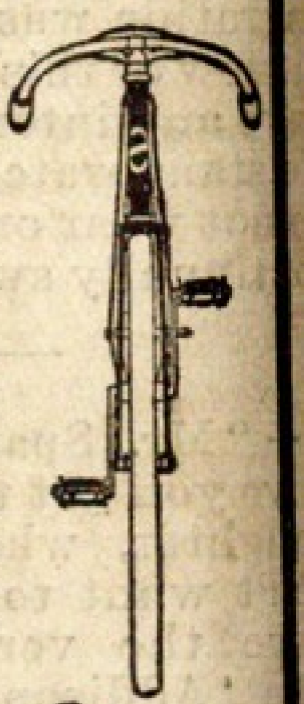

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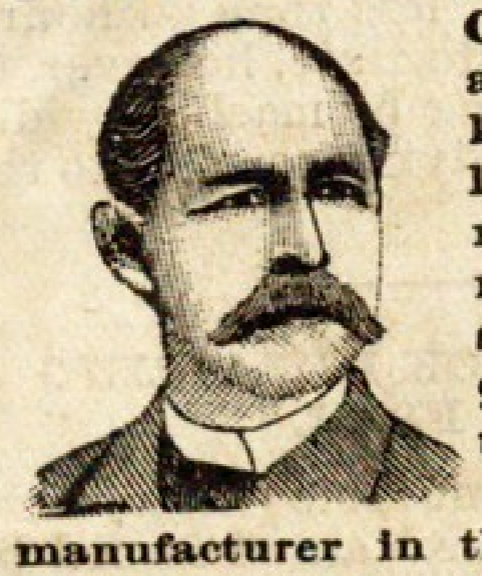

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